

T.O. Smith

A Paranormal Romance Novella

LUCIFER'S QUEEN

Lucifer's
QUEEN



T.O. SMITH



For Riley, my reason for everything that I do.

May you never know the pain of darkness.

*But if you do, may you always know that there is hope – may you find
comfort as I have.*

I love you.

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PROLOGUE

I was always considered strange.

As a baby, I was always calm – never fussy. I was so silent that I wouldn't even alert you if I needed anything – would never alert my mother of my discomfort, if I was hungry, nor if I needed a diaper change.

The only time I made any kind of sound was if my mother brought me into a church.

I cried the entire time.

And it was never a soft cry. No; it was an ear-splitting wail – as if someone were physically hurting me – as if I was in the most severe pain. Some thought I was actually dying when I screamed like that.

Even now, I could never step inside of a church. The pain that slammed into my brain felt like it was ripping me apart. And the voices in my head? They got loud – *angry*.

I eventually learned to just stay away from anything holy and related to God.

I had tried having friends growing up. At first, the voices in my head never made much sense. It was a bunch of gibberish – kind of like sitting in a very crowded room where you could hear voices, but you didn't know what everyone was saying. The voices never made any sense to me.

It was easy to have friends as a little kid.

But the older I got, the clearer the voices got.

And the louder and clearer the voices got, the more of a freak I became. I would respond to them, thinking someone was actually speaking to me. At first, everyone just laughed it off until it kept happening.

It took me a long time to decipher between reality and whoever had decided to speak to me in my mind. But by that point, everyone had already abandoned me and labeled me as 'the freak'.

But as I said earlier, the older I got, the clearer the voices got.

And the clearer the voices got, the more demanding and hateful they became.

To the point that I became a monster.

ONE

“Bela, it’s time to get up.” My mother snapped as she stepped into my room. I groaned and shoved my hands over my ears in a desperate attempt to shut her voice out. The voices in my head fucking hated her. “Your alarm went off fifteen minutes ago.”

Shut her up.

I cringed at the aggressive command. I felt like the voices got darker and darker with each day that passed. Murderous thoughts often clouded my brain, and sometimes I found myself acting on them before I could stop myself.

It was both terrifying and satisfying all at once. Terrifying because those voices could control what I think if they wanted and satisfying because it satisfied some disturbing bloodlust I had.

“Go away,” I grumbled. I glared at her before I pulled the blankets over my head, hoping she would actually listen. I didn’t want to hurt her. I loved my mother. I *never* wanted to harm her, but sometimes, I couldn’t control myself, and it never helped when she just couldn’t listen to me and go the hell away.

“Bela!” My mother screeched.

Shut her the fuck up.

I jumped up from my bed, my hand wrapping around her slender throat before I could stop myself. I narrowed my eyes at her as her face drained of all color, leaving her a sickly pale color. I tightened my hand as I gritted my teeth, watching with a sick pleasure as she clawed at my hand, her face turning blue. “I said to go away,” I growled down at her, not even caring that I was killing her.

An ice-cold touch slid over my shoulder, that soothing calmness seeping into my pores, quieting the monsters inside of my head. I closed my eyes, a soft sigh leaving my lips. I had missed him. He'd been gone for a *long* time.

“Easy, my love.” That deep, raspy voice drawled, searing hot air washing over my ear as he spoke, but that air never burned me – only soothed me and quieted my internal demons.

I never knew what this man was – figured it was just another fucked up part of me that I had learned to cope with. But I wouldn't question it, especially not when he toned down my craziness and made me feel somewhat sane again.

“Release her, Bela.” He whispered into my ear. “Easy now; you don't want to hurt her, my little destroyer.”

I slowly released my grip on my mother. That ice-cold touch slid down my body until it firmly gripped my hip and gently eased me back from my mother. My body trembled at his touch, and I couldn't help but to relax back against him.

My mother stared at me with wide, frightened eyes, her form trembling as she stood up from the floor where she had landed. “I'm making another appointment with your therapist. Obviously, your medicine doesn't work.” She snapped at me. She tried to sound brave and unaffected, but there was a slight tremor in her voice that gave her away.

Sew her lips shut.

I flinched.

“Quiet.” That voice growled from behind me. I shivered. He soothed his hand over my belly, wrapping his other arm tight around me to anchor me to him. “Just stay quiet, my queen. Right now, silence is best.”

My mother left the room, slamming my door shut behind her. I flinched at the sound. I hated it when I scared her or made her upset. She

really did try her best to be a good mom. It wasn't her fault that she got stuck with a fucked-up child.

I was so tired of being so angry all of the time – so volatile. Why couldn't I just be normal?

"The voices should be quiet for a few hours at least." That raspy voice spoke again. "You know to call on me if you need me, my love."

"You're only a figment of my imagination," I whispered. "You're not real." It was why I had never called on him. How could I call on someone who was just something I had created to comfort me?

He laughed softly, and I couldn't help the small smile that crossed my lips at the sound of his husky laugh. "Believe what you must, my love, but I am real. It's just not time yet, my sweet one. But you can always call on me. I will come to you if you call."

My bottom lip trembled. "I wish you were real." I choked out, hot tears sliding down my cheeks. God, I *needed* him to be real – to take me away from this place to somewhere I didn't have to worry about hurting anyone.

I was gently turned around, and those ice-cold fingers wiped my tears from my cheeks, those burning lips soothing across my skin after. I sobbed. "I know it's hard to distinguish between reality and what's inside of your mind, sweet girl." He said roughly. I leaned my face into his touch as he cupped my cheek. "I wish I could reveal everything to you." He sighed. "You need some rest, my love."

"Don't leave me." I whimpered. "Please, please don't leave me," I begged him, not caring how pathetic I sounded.

"You make this so hard on me, my queen. I must leave. I can never stay too long. You know that." He said softly, sadness tinging his voice. I helplessly closed my eyes, more tears sliding down my cheeks. "If I could have you with me forever beginning right now, we would leave this world." He promised.

That sounded so sweet – and too good to be true.

He brushed his lips to mine, and I sobbed, knowing this was it. He was leaving yet again.

“Sleep, my queen.”

Darkness – soothing, empty darkness – enveloped me.

★ ★ ★

“I understand that you had a burst of anger this morning.” My therapist said as she studied me. I clenched my jaw and looked away from her.

She doesn't understand you – understand us. We are a part of you. They can never fix you.

I frowned at the voice, tears burning in my eyes.

Was it too much to ask to just be normal?

“Bela, you know if these outbursts continue to happen, we will have to put you back into the center.” My therapist warned me.

I angrily jumped up from my chair, my dark eyes bursting with hatred and rage at the thought of being tossed back into that center. I had been tortured. I'd lost count of the number of needles that had been injected into me, the number of times I had been examined, my brain studied with so many different scans.

They had even tried sending electric waves to my brain to stop the voices, but they only raged and got louder.

I clenched my fists at my sides. “I'll kill you before you ever put me back in there.” I snarled.

“Easy, my sweet one.” That raspy voice spoke again, but he wasn’t touching me this time. I trembled, my eyes desperately searching the room for him though I knew I would never see him. “Sit back down, my little destroyer.”

I dropped back down onto the couch without a complaint. “Good girl.” He praised, warming my heart.

“I want to try a new mix of medications to see if it will calm down your anger some. Do you still hear the voices?” She asked me.

I mutely nodded my head. “Are they still loud and very angry?”

My bottom lip trembled as tears welled in my eyes. I wanted his touch. Why wasn’t he touching me?

“It gets worse every day.” I choked out.

I looked around, searching for him again, but he made no sound to alert me that he was back in the room with me.

They can never fix us. Get out now.

I stood up from my chair, ready to sprint from the room. Tears sprang to my eyes. Was he abandoning me? He always made them stop. They were still talking to me. I was so tired of hearing them. It was endless torture.

“Bela, our session is not over.” My therapist warned me.

My hands clenched into fists, white-hot rage suddenly rushing through my veins, making it hard to breathe.

“Fuck.” That voice I had been dying to hear again growled. “No, my queen. Not yet.” Soft, icy lips brushed against my own, and everything went dark.

★ ★ ★

No one will miss you.

I whimpered as I squeezed my eyes shut, trying hard not to cry. A week had passed since my meeting with the therapist. I felt like the medications only made me worse.

Because now, not only were the voices in my head egging me on to hurt other people, but now, they were egging me on to hurt myself – to kill myself.

And that comforting voice hadn't come back yet.

He truly was a figment of my imagination.

You could slit your throat. Leave a huge mess behind for your mother to clean up. She's always bitching about you never cleaning up after yourself. There isn't shit she can say to you if you're dead.

"Please stop." I cried, hot tears sliding down my cheeks. "Go away." I whimpered. "Just leave me alone."

"Bela, you need to come down for dinner." My older brother called out.

"Go away!" I shouted back, not wanting him to see me so torn apart like this. Kyle was the only person who tried his best to understand me and not push me past my limits. It was like somehow, he understood what was wrong with me, even if I didn't understand it myself.

He opened my bedroom door and stepped in, shutting the door behind him. I shut my eyes, my shoulders shaking as I cried. "Bela, you can't keep doing this to yourself." He said softly as he moved towards me.

I sobbed. "I want it to stop, Kyle. Why am I so fucked up?"

He sat on the edge of my head and wrapped me up in his arms.
Kill him.

“Stop.” I cried out, sobs wracking my chest. “Not him.” I cried.
“Please, not him.”

“*Shh*, little sis.” Kyle soothed as he ran his hand over my hair.

Wrap your hands around his throat.

“No!” I screamed. I ripped myself from Kyle’s arms, landing in a heap on my bedroom floor. My fingers flexed of their own accord, and I sobbed. “Kyle, get out.” I sobbed. “Please,” I begged him. “I can’t – I’m not in control.”

He looked down at me with a broken expression on his face, but there was understanding in his brown eyes. “Sis, it won’t be like this forever.” He softly promised.

“Kyle, go!” I cried.

You have a knife under your pillow. There’s an artery in his thigh.

My body began to move of its own will, and I screamed, desperately trying to fight against it. “No!” I wailed.

That ice-cold touch slithered around me. I collapsed to the floor flat on my stomach as the voices in my head instantly silenced. A sob ripped from my chest. “Where have you been?” I cried. I fisted my hands, my shoulders shaking. “It’s been torture.”

“I’m here. You can go. I’ve got her.” That voice rasped from behind me as he pulled me from the floor and onto his lap. I curled against his chest, my tears quickly wetting his shirt.

“How much longer, my king?” I thought I heard my brother ask. It was probably another fucked up part of my imagination running wild and rampant.

“I don’t know, but it’s still too soon.”

I tightly wrapped my arms around the invisible man’s neck, not wanting him to leave me again. That icy touch ran up and down my back, calming my soul, making me drowsy. My tears were slowly stopping, my breathing regulating again.

“They’re getting louder. I can hear them echoing inside of my own head when they speak to her.” The man quietly spoke.

“I know. But it’s still not time. Go. Compel your mother and father to think that she is not to be bothered until further notice. She needs me right now.”

“As you wish, my king.” I vaguely registered my brother leaving the room as my bedroom door quietly opened and clicked back closed.

“Oh, my little destroyer, what am I going to do with you?” That voice rasped as a soft, tender kiss was pressed to the top of my head.

“Love me?” I asked sleepily, wishing so badly that he was real, wishing so badly that someone besides myself could feel him, sense him.

His icy-cold lips brushed over my forehead. “I already do, my love.” I couldn’t stop it. A small smile tilted my lips. “Sleep. I will not leave for a while. You have me for the foreseeable future, my queen.”

“I don’t want to sleep,” I whined. “I missed you. It’s been bad.” I whimpered.

His arms tightened around me. “I know, my love. I hear them, too. But I can’t always step in. This is the way it has to be. I hate this for you – hate having to stand back and watch them torment you.”

“I hate being this way,” I whispered. “Why can’t I be normal?” I placed my hand over his chest. “I just want you to be real,” I admitted. “Why can’t you be real?”

His lips brushed over my cheeks. “I am real; I’m just not meant for your beautiful, mortal eyes, my love.”

“And it’s not time,” I whispered, knowing what he would say next.

He sighed. “No, my sweet, it is not time.” He said just as softly.

“Will it ever be time?” I asked him.

“Soon.” That was all he said.

I traced his jaw line, his form suddenly visible to me as a glistening blue line, but I could not see his features. I didn’t know where his lips were, or his nose, or even his eyes. All I could see was the outline of his body – as if he were a 3D drawing. It was strange, considering just moments ago, he had been completely invisible. But I didn’t question it.

“You don’t know when, do you?” I asked him, my voice breaking.

He pressed a kiss to my palm. “I do not.” He said softly. “I wish I did – wish that I could give you something to count down to when you can finally be mine, be with me where you belong, but I cannot. Perhaps because Father knows that I will be selfish and take you early. But he keeps boundaries between us. The old man upstairs always has a plan, and so far, I’m ruining all of his plans.”

“I wish you could be selfish,” I told him.

He quietly laughed. “Bela, I already am. I’m not supposed to choose you, my queen, but I am.” He said quietly. “If I could, I would take you to my world in a heartbeat, but it would kill you if I did. It is the only thing stopping me, my little destroyer. I will not lose you.”

“What is your world like?” I asked him. Even if he were only a figment of my imagination, I could still picture a future with us together. I was already crazy – fucking insane, out of my mind kind of crazy – so

there wasn't any harm in trying to picture something better than this, picture a future with the man my mind had conjured up.

Or maybe it was all just a dream. I had a bad tendency to dream about him, only to wake up cold and desolate with the voices raging in my mind.

"For most, it's hot – burning. It's hell, my sweet one." I frowned in confusion. "But our home? It will always be overcast, just as you love it. No sunshine, just perfectly cool days and nights with a slight breeze and the occasional sprinkle of rain. The grass is a rich, green color, just like the color of your beautiful eyes." I smiled softly. "Our home is an ancient castle with a gothic feel. There is no central heat – only fireplaces in each room because I know how much you love the smell of a burning fire."

"Why are you so perfect?" I asked him.

He brushed his lips with mine. "Because you were made specifically for me. I will forever cherish you, my love, and I will *never* allow anyone to rip us apart."

"But you're just a figment of my imagination." My voice broke. I hated how much that fact tore at my heart.

He sighed. "There's so much that you don't understand, my love." He brushed his lips to mine, and I sighed into his kiss. "I will not leave, Bela. Sleep."

That comforting darkness blanketed my mind.

TWO

He couldn't stay forever. Even I knew that. But it didn't make his disappearance any easier when he did have to leave.

And unlike every other time that the voices got too loud and pain pulsed through my skull, he wasn't coming.

I clutched at my head, hot tears sliding down my cheeks. I felt like more and more voices were joining in my torment each day, and I was helpless to stop it all.

My own mother and father wouldn't come near me anymore. After trying to stab my dad at dinner two nights ago, I had been locked away like the monster I truly was. My bedroom door stayed locked from the outside so that I couldn't get out, and my parents had bars installed over my windows so that I couldn't escape that way, either.

I was a prisoner inside of my own home, but it was better this way. At least this way, I was only at risk of hurting myself.

My parents were even scared to give me food. The only person brave enough to come near me was my brother, and though he always asked to see me, to let him in, I would quickly slam my door back shut once he slid my plate of food through, terrified that if he got any closer to me, he would end up dead.

I stared at my fingers, suddenly seeing my brother's blood coated them, staining them red. "No!" I shrieked as I shook my head. I looked up into the mirror, a blood-curdling scream ripping from my lips as my face twisted into a demon's, my eyes missing, blood pouring from them.

I stumbled backward, my back slamming roughly into the wall.
You are one of us.

“No!” I wailed. “I’m *fine*! I’m not a monster!” I cried as I slid down the wall.

I can prove it to you.

“No.” I whimpered. “I’m nothing like you.” I sobbed. “Please just go away.”

Grab a blade. Slice that vein in your wrist. I promise you’ll enjoy the pain. You’re just as fucked up as the rest of us. And then, you can finally come home.

I squeezed my hands over my ears as if that would stop me from being able to hear the demonic voice inside of my head. “I’m fine.” I whimpered, but even I knew that was a lie. I was far from okay. I’d never been okay. No amount of medicine could help me.

Ice-cold fingers settled over my left temple, and the voices silenced immediately. I sighed, my body sagging in relief as my tears came harder. I sobbed as I dropped my face into my hands.

“Make it stop forever,” I begged him as he sat beside me and pulled me into the circle of his arms, holding me as I wailed.

“I cannot, sweetheart – not yet anyway. You must let your brother near you. He can help you when I can’t reach you, my love.”

“I’ll hurt him.” I whimpered.

That icy touch slid over my cheek, smearing the dampness of my tears. “Yes, you will, but he can take it. He is like you, my little destroyer. He is built for the pain that you will inflict on him. But you must let him close, my queen. If you want these voices to quiet down when I’m not here to help, you must let your brother be around.”

“Sometimes I think it would be better to just kill myself.” I softly admitted.

A low rumble vibrated around the room, and his icy touch disappeared altogether.

The voices in my head roared in anger for being momentarily silenced.

And they laughed at me when I cried for him to come back.

★ ★ ★

When I woke up, I was in a padded room, and my arms were crossed over my chest, preventing me from moving them. Panic rose in my throat, fear making it hard to think rationally.

“Easy, my little destroyer.” That voice I craved so much whispered.

I opened my eyes, a sigh leaving my lips as my body sagged in relief. My heart was now pounding for an entirely different reason.

I had never imagined him. He was real.

A man, almost seven feet tall, was standing against the padded wall. Black combat boots rested on his feet, and black jeans clung to his thighs, accentuating the muscular legs beneath. A black t-shirt was plastered to the front of his body, hinting at the toned torso hidden under the fabric. His shoulders were broad and covered by a leather jacket.

Tattoos peaked out from under his jacket, appearing on his hands and fingers. They crawled up his neck from under his shirt.

Blood-red eyes stared back at me, effortlessly pulling me into him. They were framed by dark lashes. Thick eyebrows rested above his eyes, and one of them quirked up in question as I continued staring at him.

“You – oh, God,” I whispered.

His delicious lips tilted up into a smirk. “Not God, my little destroyer. But I am his son – Lucifer.”

“I’m losing my fucking mind,” I whispered, tears building in my eyes. I had thought he was finally real, only to find out I had somehow imagined the devil himself.

“No, my love.” He soothed as he pushed off the wall and moved towards me. His massive frame crouched in front of me, and he reached up to cup my cheek. That icy touch that was so familiar to me slid along my skin, soothing me and calming me. “I have always been real. It just wasn’t time for you to see me yet.”

“What changed?” I asked him as I ran my eyes over his handsome features.

He suddenly frowned, seeming disturbed by something. “You don’t know, do you?” He finally asked.

My bottom lip trembled. “Lucifer, what happened?” I asked him, fearful of the answer.

“Your father was trying to bring you food since your brother wasn’t home,” Lucifer said, his voice soft as he spoke to me. I squeezed my eyes shut, my heart ripping apart in my chest. I sobbed. I already knew what happened without him having to say it. “He didn’t stand a chance, and I couldn’t come to you. Something was blocking me from reaching you.”

Hot tears slid down my cheeks. Lucifer leaned forward and brushed his lips over my cheeks as I cried. “Your mother had you committed. I’ve been standing watch over you ever since I could get through that fucking barrier.”

“Is that why I’m being constricted?” I asked him, my voice breaking.

“Afraid so, my love.” He said quietly.

My shoulders shook as I cried. "I never meant to – to—"

Lucifer brushed his lips over my forehead. "I know, my love." He softly spoke. "I know you didn't. You can't help the voices in your head. They're there for a reason." He informed me, shocking me that he had known this entire time that I wasn't hallucinating my voices.

"Why?" I whimpered. "Why can't I just be fucking normal?"

Lucifer gently gripped my chin, forcing my eyes up to his. "Because you are meant to be my queen, Bela. I've known from the moment you were conceived that I would have a queen, but I did not know who she was or where to find her. For eighteen years, I waited until Father would reveal your identity to me. And even then, I could not get close to you. Not until the demons in your head became clear in their motive to you."

"They're just voices." I whimpered, not wanting to believe him. I'd rather be hallucinating than to know that it was demons inside of my head.

"No, my love. They are my demons, but when God has a plan, he can take away some of my control. Which is what he did. It is part of my final punishment. After I gain you as my queen, I can choose redemption and come back to Heaven, but that means leaving you behind in Hell to take my place."

"No." I whimpered, wishing I could touch him. I couldn't lose him.

He brushed his lips over my temple. "Easy, my love. I did not say that I would. Since I laid my eyes on you, I have only wanted you. Nothing else matters to me. Father wants me to change my mind badly – I know he does, but he fucked up when he gave me a chance of happiness with you to rule beside me."

“Why is it so easy for me to believe that you are who you say you are?” I asked him quietly. “All of this sounds insane and like it’s part of my fucked up mind, though you’re right in front of me – living, breathing flesh.”

Lucifer closed his eyes. “Cerberus.” He called quietly.

A humungous three-headed dog appeared. A hissing snake made its tail. I shrieked as I stared at him, fear making my heart pound hard and fast in my chest. Lucifer soothed his icy hand over my hair. “Calm down, my little destroyer. Cerberus is the watchdog of Hell and my loyal companion. There’s no need to be afraid of him. He will never harm you. And if you wish for him to stay, he will. No one in this center will come near you.”

Cerberus stared at me with three sets of eyes, almost as if he could understand what I was thinking.

I can.

The fact that I heard his voice in my head didn’t alarm me. “He is the only voice that I cannot block,” Lucifer explained. “The voices will come back when I am away, but Cerberus can help you while I’m gone.”

“Will the doctors and nurses be able to see him?” I asked.

Lucifer nodded. “They will, and just as Cerberus can speak into your mind, he can speak into the mind of other humans as well. As I said, they will not come near you with a single pill or needle. You’re not fucked up, my little destroyer. You are just being molded into my queen. That’s all. No amount of science and medication will be able to help you.”

“I’m really beginning to think being your queen sucks.” I bit out, suddenly angry.

Cerberus released a puff of air in what I thought was supposed to be laughter. Lucifer narrowed his eyes at me. “When this is all over, sweet

one, and you are no longer suffering, I promise that the only place you will ever wish to be is right by my side.”

My lord, Gabriel is headed towards the gates. Cerberus suddenly spoke, his words transmitting to me as well, though I knew they were meant for Lucifer.

Lucifer growled, his eyes momentarily flashing with the fires of Hell before they returned to their normal, blood-red color. He leaned down and brushed his lips over mine, soothing my soul. He removed the straight jacket that I was in and placed his leather jacket over my shoulders. I threaded my arms through the sleeves, sighing in contentment as the smell of burning wood surrounded me.

Lucifer trailed his fingers over my cheek. “My queen will never be restrained again.” He quietly swore. I leaned my face into his touch. “Cerberus will be here while I am gone, but if the voices are too much for you to bear, simply call my name. I will hear you, my little destroyer, and I will come if I can; I promise.”

With that, he disappeared.

★ ★ ★

I clutched at my head as I whimpered. The demons inside of my head weren’t stupid. They knew trying to attack Cerberus would only end poorly.

So, instead, they were attacking my brain with high-pitched screams and the sounds of tortured souls.

Cerberus whined as he nuzzled one of his heads underneath my arms. I looked down at him as tears streamed down my cheeks. “I won’t call him.” I croaked. “He’s busy.”

He told you to call him if you couldn't handle it. Call him, my lady, or I will summon him for you. He will not be pleased with you if I have to.

“Don’t.” I whimpered as I flinched. “He will come back when he can. He always does.”

Nothing is separating him from you now. If the pain continues, he will feel it eventually, my lady. Your bond with my lord is growing and strengthening.

The highest pitched scream I’d ever heard ripped through my skull, feeling like it was splitting it in half. I screamed in pain, my body collapsing to the floor from my bed as I curled into a ball, clutching at my head as if to hold it together.

“Lucifer!” I screeched, gagging right after when the pain in my head intensified.

Cold lips soothed over mine almost instantly, and the screaming in my head silenced immediately afterward. Darkness enveloped me in its icy, comforting touch.

★ ★ ★

“Keep them out, Cerberus,” Lucifer growled from behind me, jerking me awake.

I was on my bed, and my head was resting on Lucifer’s arm, my back plastered to the front of his body. He was spooning me from behind, his other arm draped over my waist. His body temperature was fluctuating between hot and cold, and it felt perfect.

The door to my room opened, and the nurse screamed when she landed her eyes on Cerberus. Whatever tray she had been holding dropped to the floor as she dashed back out of the room, slamming closed and locking my door behind her.

Lucifer laughed softly from behind me. “Humans are really such fragile little things.”

All except my lady, my lord.

Lucifer’s icy lips pressed to the back of my head. “Ah, yes, all but her – my queen.” He tightened his arm around me. “Good morning, my little destroyer.”

Cerberus walked over and crouched down so his heads were resting on my mattress. I reached out rubbed one of his heads behind the ear. “Good morning.” I softly replied to Lucifer.

“Cerberus will be leaving shortly to fetch you some food,” Lucifer informed me.

My eyebrows pulled together in confusion as I looked at the massive beast in front of me. “How will he accomplish that?”

Lucifer smiled against my shoulder before he pressed a soft, quick kiss there. “He can shift forms.” Lucifer told me. “However, you’re not ready for that yet.” I sighed in aggravation. I was really sick of that saying. Lucifer tightened his arm around me. “Easy, my love. It is simply —”

“Not time yet,” I grumbled, interrupting him.

Lucifer laughed softly. “Cranky in the mornings, aren’t you?” He asked.

“I’m tired of being kept in the dark,” I complained.

Lucifer sighed. “All in due time, my queen.”

I huffed angrily. Lucifer quietly growled in my ear as a warning for me to watch my temper. “Easy, my love. Just because the demons aren’t taunting you doesn’t mean that you still aren’t volatile completely on your own. I’d hate to have to pull rank over you.” I frowned. “Just

breathe and know that as soon as I can tell you something about your destiny, I will, but as of right now, I can't. Even if I tried, the words would be blocked from passing my lips."

I turned over to face him and buried my face against his chest. He wrapped both arms around me, holding me tight to him. "Cerberus, breakfast." He ordered. "Your queen needs to eat."

Lucifer held the back of my head to his chest as I heard the snapping of bones from behind me. I gagged at the sound.

Lucifer brushed his lips to my forehead. "It will become easier with time to hear him shift." He assured me.

We were silent for a while, both of us enjoying the other's company before I spoke again. "Lucifer, how bad will it get?" I asked, a little terrified of the answer, but needing to know anyway.

Lucifer sighed. "I don't know, my love." That answer sounded like it really bothered him. "I wish I did, but I do not know. When it comes to you and what the path is for you to become mine, I am not one hundred percent sure of all the details. I am learning your changes just as you are."

I snuggled closer to him. "Do you think there will ever be a time that you can't silence the demons in my mind?" I asked him fearfully.

Lucifer swallowed thickly. "Perhaps." He said softly.

Fear lodged itself in my throat.

I didn't like the sound of that.

And judging by the way Lucifer tightened his hold on me? He didn't either.

THREE

Cerberus laid his massive body in front of my door, preventing anyone from entering. “So, if you get blocked from me sometimes,” I asked Lucifer as I finished chewing the bite of food I had in my mouth, “does the same thing happen to Cerberus? Does he get blocked from me, too?”

Lucifer shook his head. “No.” He replied. “Cerberus will always be here with you. No one can remove him from you.”

I looked up at Lucifer as he paced to the tiny window on my door to look out. He grunted at whatever he saw. “They’re trying to figure out which brave soul is going to come to bring you medication.” He scoffed.

Cerberus growled. *No one will be medicating our queen.* Cerberus’s deep voice vibrated through my skull.

I set my food aside, suddenly no longer hungry. A high-pitched screech suddenly sounded through my skull. I screamed in agony as I reached up to clutch at my head. Lucifer roared when he tried to move towards me, but he was blocked. I curled into a ball, sobs wracking my chest as the screams and screeches intensified in volume. Lucifer roared again as the temperature dropped below freezing in the room, leaving me shaking.

Cerberus managed to wedge his massive body onto my bed, and he curled up around me. I sobbed as I clutched at my hair, barely resisting the urge to yank it out.

“Make it stop.” I sobbed. “Lucifer,” I cried, “help me.”

Cerberus whined. Lucifer roared in rage.

The door to my room burst open. Cerberus jumped off the bed, crouching in front of me with a deadly snarl – a threat not to come any closer to me. The doctor quickly scampered out of the room, but not before Lucifer snatched the syringe he had been holding out of his arm.

“Shift,” Lucifer ordered Cerberus. “I cannot fucking get to her. Reveal your true fucking form and inject her with this. It will make her go to sleep.”

“Lucifer.” I cried, reaching for him. I sobbed, a scream of agony ripping from my lips right after.

His eyes were filled with so much pain and sadness that I wailed on his behalf. “I cannot come to you, my queen. I am so fucking sorry.”

I clawed at the bed sheets, the screeching intensifying, seeming to feed off of my pain. I squeezed my eyes shut, screaming out my pain again. So, when Cerberus shifted and injected me with whatever was in the needle, I did not get to see his true form.

Darkness swam through my mind, cloaking me in its comfort.

★ ★ ★

Lucifer’s face was the first I saw when I woke up. He was leaning against the wall that my bed was against, and he was holding me tightly in his arms, his head rested back against the wall with his eyes shut. Cerberus was laying against my door, his massive body holding it shut.

She is awake, my king. Cerberus spoke.

“I know,” Lucifer said quietly. He opened his eyes and looked down at me. “I have to leave.” He said softly. Tears burned in my eyes. I shook my head at him, clutching his leather jacket in my fists. He brushed his cold lips to my forehead. *This couldn’t be happening.* “I am sorry, my queen, but I must. Even now, I am resisting the pull with every fiber of my being. I did not want to leave without telling you first.”

I sobbed. “I don’t want you to leave me.” I cried.

He tightened his arms around me. “I do not want to leave you, either.” He admitted. “But I must.” He drew in a deep breath. “Do not fight the

darker side of you.” I opened my mouth to protest, but he shook his head at me, silencing me. “I know you want to be good, but to be my queen, you cannot. I am the epitome of evil and darkness.” He reminded me. “Give in to it. Wreck destruction wherever you must – wherever you feel like it. Cerberus will follow you. He is yours to command.” He leaned down and brushed his lips with mine.

I sighed softly, his kiss taking away some of the aches in my chest, though I knew it would return full force once he left me. “Will you come to me?” I asked him.

He nodded. “When it is time, my queen, I will find you.” He cupped my cheek. “I will *always* find you, my little destroyer.”

I pressed my hand to his cool cheek, tears swimming in my eyes. He leaned forward, brushing his lips over mine. “Be strong, my queen. When you accept your fate, the voices will silence.” He promised.

“Find me,” I begged him. I had a feeling once I gave in, that would be it. He would be the only one that could bring me back to him – bring my back to myself.

“Always, my queen.” He swore.

He set me aside and stood up from the bed. A tear slid down my cheek. “Cerberus, you do not leave her fucking side.” He ordered. He reached out and ran the tips of his cool fingers over my cheek. “Until next time, my love.”

I whispered his name – a broken plea to stay – as he disappeared.

★ ★ ★

I sighed as I hung upside down from my bed. For some reason, the voices were silent – had been for hours now. Cerberus raised his heads at my sigh. “I’m so fucking tired of the same damn walls,” I grumbled.

We can break out of here, my lady.

I snorted. “And do what?” I asked him. “I’m a fucking lunatic. The moment I step out of this room, those voices will come back, and I will slaughter everyone.”

Cerberus blew out a puff of air. *You are not meant to be good, my queen.*

I sat up and turned my body so that I was now facing him properly. “How do you just *kill* someone?” I demanded. “That’s just – it’s fucking inhumane.”

Like this. Cerberus told me.

I shrieked when he began to shift in front of me. My cheeks flamed as I forced myself to keep my eyes focused on him. He snatched a pair of jeans from under my bed and tugged them on right as my door opened.

He walked over and without a single emotion on his face, he snapped the nurse’s neck and tossed her back out into the hallway, slamming the door shut afterward.

Laughter filled my mind – sick, twisted, gleeful laughter. My fingers twitched. Cerberus smirked at me, his golden eyes glinting with mischief. “What do you say, my lady?” He asked me in a deep, dark voice. “Let’s have some fun, shall we?”

Laughter rose again, and like a switch in my brain, every thought of doing good, every thought of trying to save everyone from myself, turned off.

Just like that.

I stood up from the bed on my socked feet and moved towards Cerberus. He bowed, a smirk playing on his lips. “And there she is.” He said softly – almost as if he were amazed. He grabbed my hand and pressed a kiss to the back of it. I could see my eyes flash colors in his,

becoming a blood-red color for a moment before it disappeared. “Let’s get out of here.”

“Stop her!” Someone yelled from behind us as I walked out of the room.

I didn’t even bother to turn. Cerberus grabbed my hand in his again, holding me with him as we walked down the corridor. Everyone stared at me in fear, and a wicked smile curved my lips.

I was in control. I finally held all of the power.

Suddenly, Cerberus stopped and yanked my body in front of his. An animalistic roar ripped from his chest.

I spun around to face him, panic clawing at my throat. That had been a sound of pain, and the thought of him being hurt terrified me.

His eyes were blazing gold, rage simmering in their depths. “Fucking foolish humans.” He growled as he reached behind him and yanked something off of his back. He tossed the cords to the ground before he was suddenly gone from in front of me.

He appeared a few feet from where I was standing, and he ripped the security guard’s head clean off of his shoulders with a snarl twisting his lips.

I smiled at him as he turned to face me, blood covering his hands and forearms, splattering across his clothes and face. “My guardian,” I said sweetly, holding my hand out to him.

He flashed me a smile. “Always, my queen.”

★ ★ ★

LUCIFER

Cerberus opened his eyes when I appeared in the small hotel room he and my queen had commandeered for their own for the night. She was passed out on the bed, light snores escaping her lips. She was finally getting peaceful rest, not being disturbed by her torturous thoughts and the demons of Hell.

And I had Cerberus to thank for that. He had saved her from her own hell by forcing her mind to flip that switch until I could come for her and take her back home with me.

“My king.” He whispered, not wanting to wake her, knowing that seeing me would hurt her. She might have every bit of good switched off in her body, but she would never be able to switch off her need for me.

“She sleeps,” I said quietly. I walked over to the bed, stuffing my hands in the pockets of my black jeans to keep from reaching out for her. I craved her just as much as she craved me, but it was not our time yet.

“Like a baby,” Cerberus confirmed. “I have not let her take a life. I will do everything in my power to keep her from doing so. It seems to please that darkness within her enough to see me do it for her.”

I didn’t remove my eyes from her, taking in every bit of moment of this with her that I could. “Her soul is not meant for murder.” I’d known that from the very beginning. “It is why she lost herself after murdering her father. She feeds off of what you do for her.”

Cerberus smirked. “She calls me her guardian.”

I growled at him, my eyes flashing with the fires of Hell. He swallowed thickly, fear momentarily flashing in his golden eyes. “Do not get caught in your feelings with her. She is my queen.” I reminded him. “All of you will feel attached to her – it is natural.”

“She is yours, my king. I would never intrude on what you two have together. And when your time is finally here, she will fall, and it will be the most beautiful fall of all.”

“And I will be there to catch her, just as you will guide her down.”

He nodded. “Do you think it will frighten her to become one of your demons before she is your queen?” He asked after a moment.

I shook my head. “No, because I will never look at her any differently. She will still be my beautiful Bela. As long as she sees that truth in my eyes, her transitioning will be smooth from demon to queen. We just must first be patient. Everything will happen at its own time.”

“She craves your approval, my king.”

I nodded. I knew that. “I will follow her to the darkest parts of this world, Cerberus. She will never have reason to doubt me.” I looked up at him. “But you must always be there for her to call upon, just as you are here with her now.”

“Her brother?” He asked, mentioning Kyle.

I shook my head. “It is not his time yet. The Angel of Death is taking care of his own matters before he can be at her service.”

Cerberus shook his head. “God is going to be pissed, Lucifer. None of this is going according to His plan.”

I shrugged. “It is his own fault for giving His children free will of their own fates.” I looked back down at my beautiful queen. “And I will do everything in my power to always ensure that she chooses me, that she remembers me in her darkest hours,” I smirked. “And I will make as many of His children fall as I can to ensure that they all bow down to her.”

Cerberus laughed softly. “I cannot wait to see her in her rightful position as our queen, my king.”

“She will be beautiful.” I felt that familiar tug and growled softly. “My time is up.” I looked up at him, letting him see the promise of pain and torture in my eyes if he defied me or allowed anything to happen to her. “Do not fucking leave her side,” I ordered.

He swallowed thickly and bowed to me. “Never, my king.”

I disappeared.

FOUR

BELA

Cerberus kept my hand held in his as we moved through the city streets. My feet were beginning to ache. I was extremely tired of walking since we had been walking for hours by that point, and the boots I had on were *not* made for this.

“Cerberus,” I whined. He grunted. I knew I was beginning to annoy him, but I needed to sit down. “Seriously, where in the world are you taking me? I’m hungry, my feet hurt, and I need a damn rest.” I griped.

Cerberus sighed. “Woman, I am trying to get you out of this god-forsaken city and somewhere people won’t bother you. Can you please just be a bit more patient?” He asked me.

“No!” I snapped at him, suddenly furious. I yanked my hand from his and marched over to a bench, sitting my ass down on it. He stood in front of me with a glower on his face. I crossed my arms over my chest and crossed my legs. I knew I was acting like a child, but I didn’t care. I was tired. We had been walking for hours.

“Find me a fucking car or something. I’m not walking anymore. I’m done for the day.” I told him, and I meant it. Unless we were driving, I was not moving from this damn bench.

He glared at me. “You are truly beginning to wear on my last nerve.” He told me.

I smirked at him, noticing a couple walking by us hand in hand, sweet, love-sick smiles on their faces. My gut twisted, a pang slicing through my chest as I thought of Lucifer.

“Let me brighten it for you.” I sweetly replied, feeling anything but sweet.

I felt murderous.

I jumped up from the bench. My hands only had a split moment to grip the woman’s head to snap her neck before Cerberus yanked me back. He snapped her neck for me before he swung his angry eyes to me. Screams of terror sounded around us, but I only met Cerberus’s glare with one of my own.

“I have just about fucking had it with you!” He shouted at me. “What is your fucking deal?!”

“Where is Lucifer?” I snapped at him, my hands fisting at my sides. Rage like no other slid through my veins. It felt like my soul was on fire. Cerberus’s eyes widened. “Where is he?!” I screeched, making him wince.

I needed Lucifer. It was no longer a want. It was a carnal fucking need.

Cerberus dropped to his knees with a whine, his hands reaching up to grip his head. Lucifer appeared behind him and rested a hand on Cerberus’s shoulder. “On your feet.” He ordered.

I locked my eyes on my king. “Stay down,” I growled at Cerberus, my eyes staying locked on the beautiful man in front of me. I could hear police sirens, but I didn’t give a fuck.

He was finally in front of me.

My king. My Lucifer.

“You cause Hell on Earth, woman, do you know that?” Lucifer asked me, but there was a smile playing on his lips. He helped Cerberus up to his feet. “It is her time.” He told him. “Let her.”

Lucifer’s figure shimmered. I cried out, reaching for him. He became solid once again, and he reached up to cup my face in his hands. “Breathe

and rage, my queen. Allow Cerberus to follow you. I will come for you – I promise. It's not much longer now – not at all." He assured me.

"Must you leave?" I asked him quietly, my voice trembling.

He brushed his lips over mine. I sighed, closing my eyes, falling into him. He tightly wound his arms around me. "I am always with you. Remember that." He gripped my chin as he pulled his lips from mine. I slowly opened my eyes, locking them on his red ones. "Now, wreak destruction, my little destroyer."

He disappeared, and Cerberus held me up, keeping me from falling to the ground. I screamed in rage and pain, hating that he was always leaving me. The voices in my head returned, but this time, they roared to release our pain – to make everyone around us feel just as we did.

And this time, I listened. Cerberus shifted beside me, guarding me against officers and attackers, ripping them to shreds as I ran through the streets of downtown, snapping necks and attacking people, completely losing my fucking mind.

It was bliss.

★ ★ ★

It had to have been hours later when Lucifer appeared in front of me again, halting me in my tracks, almost making me fall on my face as I stumbled. Cerberus continued attacking, keeping me safe, but my eyes were locked on the King of Hell in front of me. His massive, black wings were spread out behind him, and the fires of Hell blazed in his black eyes. He was shirtless, his tanned skin smooth, like he had been carved from marble and was not flesh and bones, his ink wrapping around his body like a painting.

He was the most beautiful person I'd ever laid my eyes on.

“It is time, my queen.” He told me, his eyes never leaving mine.

I smiled. His eyes cooled to their blood-red color, inviting me in, pulling me towards him. “There she is.” He breathed. He held out his hand to me. “You’re mine now, Bela.”

“I’ve *always* been yours.” I corrected him as I placed my hand in his.

His wings wrapped around me, enveloping me in their softness as his lips pressed to mine. “Sleep, my queen.”

Everything went dark.

★ ★ ★

LUCIFER

Kyle appeared in front of me, his massive, black wings disappearing inside of his back as soon as his feet touched the ground. He looked down at his sister, his features softening.

If there was one person in this world that the Angel of Death cared for, it was his little sister.

Bela was asleep on my bed, her body and facial features already beginning to change to resemble the demon form she would now take until it was time for her to take her place at my side as my queen.

“She’s going to lose her mind when she sees what she’s turned into.” He said quietly. He crouched and brushed his hand over her cheek, which was slowly turning a dark shade of red. “She won’t feel worthy in your eyes. You’re the only one she feels has ever understood her.” He told me as if I didn’t already know that. I came to her in her darkest moments. I had seen her at her absolute worst, and I loved her through it all.

I knew she just wanted to be perfect in my eyes. What she didn't understand yet, was that she always would be. Whether she was human, a demon, or my immortal queen, she would *always* be perfect.

I shook my head at him. "She'll never have reason to doubt my feelings for her," I assured him. "She is still mine – still my beautiful Bela. She always will be."

He stood back up to his full height. "I'll come to see her soon. I need to deal with some things on my end first. I want to spend a couple of days with her – give her some of the normalcy that she's been missing."

I nodded in understanding. I wanted her to have normalcy as well, but not much of her life was going to be normal anymore – not that it really was before. She was to be my queen. She would soon begin connecting with everyone in my realm of the world. Humanity was no longer attainable for her.

"Your mother?" I asked him.

Ever since Bela accidentally killed her father in one of her rage-filled fits, their mother had gone off of the deep end. I had been using demons of my own to hold her back, and Kyle had been trying as well.

He sighed, glaring up at the ceiling of my room before looking back at me. "Mother has been trying to locate her since Bela disappeared off the face of the earth. Her magic isn't strong enough to locate her, though – not with her being here in Hell."

"I feel black magic will soon be in the works," I warned him.

His eyes flashed, his reaper pushing through, wanting to protect his sister – his queen. "She'll be slaughtered." He snarled.

I smirked at him. "Aren't you supposed to be neutral?" I asked him. "Like some Switzerland shit?"

He barked out a laugh. “Not when it concerns my queen.” He told me. “And she’s my sister. If someone thinks they can hurt her, they’ll have a rude fucking awakening.”

With that, his wings ripped from his back again, and he disappeared.

★ ★ ★

Bela moaned in discomfort. I knelt beside her, running my hand over her body, hoping to ease her pain. She wouldn’t wake – not until the transformation was complete – but that didn’t mean she still wouldn’t feel the effects of the change.

Cerberus stepped into the room, his eyes landing on his queen. “How is she?”

I shrugged, not answering him. I could feel her pain within me, but I was a damn good tolerator of pain, But I knew she was not, and the amount of pain I was beginning to feel was making me angry. I knew this was something she had to go through, but I didn’t fucking like it. It was goddamn painful, and I knew it was even stronger for her.

This pain made me want to destroy something.

Tears spilled down her cheeks, the sizzling heat from her tears burning her skin, only for her face to heal immediately after – one of the perks of her being a demon. She whined in her sleep, but still did not wake. Cerberus reached out to touch her shoulder, and he jerked his hand back with a hiss. “She’s fucking *burning*.”

“I know,” I said quietly. I could feel her body heating beneath my touch, but it didn’t affect me. The coolness of my skin rivaled the heat from hers. I brushed my lips to her forehead. She sighed, subconsciously leaning into me. I knew my touch cooled her – comforted her.

“How much longer?” He asked me.

I shrugged. “I don’t know,” I told him honestly. “I wish I did know, but I don’t. I just have to wait.”

He shifted into his beast and lied down on the floor on her side of the bed, settling in to wait patiently – to wait for his queen to wake up. I knew Cerberus had formed a bond with her – one that was unbreakable. He would always be her protector.

I brushed my lips to hers. “No matter what, my little demon, you are always perfect to me,” I whispered.

★ ★ ★

Bela suddenly jerked awake, a low moan of pain sliding through her lips. I knew she would be uncomfortable for a day or two considering all of the changes her body had just gone through.

Her skin was red – blood red – and her eyes burned with the flames of Hell, no longer that beautiful green, almost cool moss color, that they had been when she was human, though I knew the color of her eyes would return once she officially became my queen – became a ruler of Hell alongside me.

Her nails had extended into talons, and her once brown hair was now an inky black color that fell to the curve of her lower back. I had one of the other female demons change her into a comfortable pair of leggings and one of my t-shirts so she would be more comfortable when she woke, but I was sorely regretting not having the demon put a bra on her since her nipples were pressing against my t-shirt, teasing me.

“Lucifer.” She whimpered as she stared at herself in horror. She looked up at me, fear and uncertainty shining in her eyes. “What’s wrong with me?”

“Easy, my queen.” I soothed as I knelt in front of her, sliding my palms over her thighs. She shuddered under my touch, the fire in her eyes blazing higher in reaction to me. I tampered down my own need for her as her arousal filled the room. I’d forgotten how much she would crave sex as a demon.

“You are a demon.” I gently told her. Scorching hot tears slid down her cheeks, burning her skin before it quickly healed. “Your feelings are still very human, and it will remain that way, but you are going through your next change.”

“I’m so ugly.” She whimpered.

“No.” I soothed. I stood back up to my full height and leaned down, placing my hands on either side of her hips, sliding my lips with hers. She moaned, her hands fisting in my shirt, drawing herself closer to me. I growled, my blood pounding through my veins, urging me to claim her now that I finally could.

“Woman.” I snarled, but it didn’t deter her. She yanked me on top of her as she laid back on the mattress, her lips moving over my jaw.

“Fuck.” I swore. I gripped her wrists and pinned them above her head, my eyes blazing with the fires of Hell, just like hers. I could barely think past the lust in my brain, but this wasn’t the time. She was still in pain, and if I took her, I would take her like a fucking savage – like a man starved.

Her body couldn’t take that right now.

She whined, her hips rising to rub against my cock as she spread her legs, cradling me between her perfect, thick thighs. Dammit, this woman was going to be the death of me. “Luc.” She whimpered.

“Fuck, my queen, I know.” I rumbled. I kissed her hard – almost devouring her – before I pulled back from her again. She whined. “But you’re in pain. You need to allow your body time to heal from the change. I will take you when your body is ready, and when I do, we will not leave

this room for *hours*.” I promised her. She moaned, her hips rising again in reaction to my words. I gently pushed them back down. “But not today,” I growled as I tightened my hand on her hip, forcing her body to stay flat on the mattress.

She was a fucking vixen.

“I need you.” She whined. “It’s burning me alive.”

Her body was urging her to complete the bond with me, but I couldn’t – not while she was still hurting like this.

But I could satisfy her for a little while without hurting her.

With a muttered curse, I leaned up on my knees and gripped her shirt, gently easing it over her head. She groaned in pain, her face twisting in discomfort. I brushed my lips over her jaw, soothing her pain all while groaning at the feel of her soft tits as they brushed against my own chest.

I may not be able to take her like I wanted nor like she wanted, but I could satisfy that ache within her for a few hours at least.

I yanked her panties and leggings down her legs next, leaving her beautiful body bare before me. Her red skin shimmered, almost revealing her human skin before it settled again. The side of her that completely belonged to me was stronger than the demon form that had taken over her, but it wasn’t time for it to take back over yet.

Because when it did, my soul would be twined with hers, officially giving her immortality so she could spend forever by my side.

“Luc, what – oh, *fuck*.” She moaned as I slid my fingers along her slit. I growled softly in response, inhaling deeply as her arousal permeated the air.

She was soaked for me.

“I’m going to take care of you,” I promised as I pressed a kiss to the valley between her breasts.

Using my thumb, I circled her clit, keeping my moves slow and steady as I slid a finger into her tight opening, watching every beautiful emotion as they flashed across her face. She was losing herself in this moment with me, and it was fucking sexy as hell to watch.

My cock was straining in my jeans, straining to be buried deep inside of her, but this would be enough for me right now. It would have to be. I would not hurt her further.

Her hands were fisted in the blankets of my bed, her back arching off of the mattress, my name falling from her lips as she begged me for more – begged me to never stop.

She was my queen. My wish was her command.

To a certain extent, anyway.

I leaned forward and covered my lips with hers, swallowing her scream as she came hard around my fingers, her body shaking and trembling as she clutched at my shoulders, her talons ripping into my skin, but I didn't give a fuck. I would heal instantly, and the pain? It felt fucking amazing.

I slowly worked her down from her orgasm, watching her beautiful body as it slowly began to relax, her eyes shutting with exhaustion.

“Better?” I asked her, a small smile playing on my lips.

“Mhm.” She mumbled. I slowly eased my fingers out of her and licked them clean. Fuck, she tasted so sweet.

Her eyes flashed open, her lips parting in surprise. If she were capable of blushing in this form, her entire body would be red. I shot her a wicked smirk. “You taste really fucking good.” I rumbled.

“Oh, my God.” She whispered in mortification.

I laughed before I leaned down and gently lifted her sore body from the bed, cradling her to my chest as I carried her into the bathroom. “I’m

going to run you a bath,” I told her as I set her on the bathroom counter. I moved over to the huge bathtub. “I need to check on some things, and then I’ll come back to you.”

“Will you join me?” She asked.

After turning the water on for her, I moved back to my wicked little demon and pressed a kiss to her lips. “Not today,” I told her. “If I get undressed anywhere around you, I’m going inside of you. I need to keep my restraint.”

She pouted. It was so fucking adorable that it brought a smile to my face. “Why are you teasing me?” She whined.

I ran my hand over her curvy body, leaning forward to kiss her slowly – deeply – my hands gripping her juicy ass to tug her body closer to me. “I believe you are the one teasing me.” I playfully growled. I nipped at her bottom lip, and her moan made all of the blood in my dick pound. “Fuck.” I swore. I stepped back from her. “Bath, my little destroyer.”

With that, I slipped from the bathroom before I put her in more pain and discomfort than she was already in.

FIVE

BELA

I hadn't realized that I had fallen asleep in the tub until Lucifer was lifting me from the water. I groaned, slowly opening my eyes to look up at him. "Sleep well?" He lightly teased.

If I had been capable of blushing in this form, I would have. "I didn't mean to fall asleep," I told him quietly, a yawn falling from my lips immediately after.

Lucifer softly laughed. "Your body just went through a lot of changes, my love. Of course, you would be tired." He looked down at my face. "How are you feeling?"

"Better now," I told him honestly. I always felt better whenever he touched me. My stomach rumbled, though, announcing its hunger. "Hungry." I sheepishly admitted, a shy smile on my lips.

"Let's get you dressed, and then we'll go see what has been made for dinner." He told me. He gently set me on my feet, holding my waist in his hands as he waited for me to regain my balance. My chest rubbed against his bare one, and I moaned, my body heating in response.

A soft growl sounded from Lucifer's chest, and he pulled me against him, his arm wrapping around my waist before his lips covered mine. I could feel my soul desperately trying to twine with his, but he was holding back, keeping all of himself from me.

"Not now." He told me.

I yanked back from him, hurt suddenly flooding my system. It was never time. I was so fucking sick of shit never being the right time with him.

I snatched a robe from the wall and wrapped it around myself, suddenly wanting to cover my body from his eyes.

He kept rejecting me. I thought I was his queen.

Was he changing his mind?

“Woman,” Lucifer growled. I ignored him, turning away from him to go lock myself in the bathroom like a pouting child. But I was pouting. My feelings were hurt. Of course, he wouldn’t want me – not now that I fucking looked like *this*.

“*Bela!*” He roared. I flinched. “Don’t you fucking turn your back on me.” He growled.

I glared at him over my shoulder, my body heating, almost burning with rage and hurt. “You can go fuck yourself.” I snarled.

I didn’t even have a chance to step foot back into the bathroom before Lucifer grabbed my wrist and yanked me around to face him, his blood-red eyes glaring down into my own. “You still need to heal.” He snapped down at me, the flames of Hell flashing in his eyes for a moment before he smothered it.

“Lies.” I gritted, not wanting him to know how hurt I was that he kept turning me down. I wanted him – badly. I didn’t even know it was possible to crave someone as badly as I craved him to claim me – to make me his. “You just can’t stand to look at me like this.”

He grabbed my hand and placed it over his jeans. I gasped at the feel of his hard cock, and it slightly jumped under my touch. He was long and hard, and he swelled even more in my hand.

“I want you so fucking badly that it is *killing* me inside to deny you.” He told me. My lips slightly parted, my breathing quickening. “The bath has relaxed your muscles, but give it about thirty minutes to an hour, and

you will begin to feel your discomfort again. I am your king; you are *mine*. I will *not* intentionally hurt you.”

Tears welled in my eyes, burning a path down my cheeks. He pressed his lips to my burning skin, that coolness sweeping through me. “I’m sorry.” I whimpered, feeling stupidly pathetic now.

He pulled me into his arms, holding me tight to him. “You will never be ugly in my eyes, my little demon.” He promised as he brushed his lips to my temple. I sighed, relaxing further in his arms. He was so cool against my heated skin. “When your body is ready, I will take you hard. I plan to fuck you so hard that we break my bed.” I moaned at his words as I slid my hands along his hard abs, feeling his muscles quiver beneath my touch. “But not right now.”

“Okay,” I whispered.

He leaned down and kissed me, his lips taking mine savagely – with a bruising force – before he slowly released me and moved towards a door on the other side of the room. He opened it and flicked on a light, revealing a huge walk-in closet. I slowly followed behind him, a gasp leaving my lips when I saw all of the women’s clothing.

“I bought all of these for you.” He told me when I looked over at him. “It was inevitable that you would come to me. I was not letting you go. Pick whatever you want. I tried to buy only what you were comfortable with wearing.”

I grabbed his face in my red hands and pressed a searing kiss to his lips. He smiled at me – that perfect, breathtaking smile – when I leaned back from him again. “Thank you,” I told him, meaning it from the bottom of my heart.

He reached up and brushed his cool thumb over my cheek. I closed my eyes, leaning my face into his touch. “Anything for you, my queen.” He brushed his nose with mine. “Get dressed. Cerberus will bring you to the dining room.” He informed me.

★ ★ ★

When I stepped out of the closet, I was wearing a pair of leggings and a loose, long-sleeved shirt with a pair of knee-high purple and blue socks. Cerberus laughed at my socks when I emerged. “Sexy.” He teased.

I laughed. “Not what I was aiming for.” I retorted.

He grinned and held his hand out to me. “I doubt my king will care what you wear, my lady. He’ll find you irresistible either way.”

I hid my face with my hair as I placed my hand in his, allowing him to lead me from Lucifer’s room and into the hallway. “Will you be eating with us?” I asked him after a moment.

He nodded. “Yes, and Lucifer has a surprise for you as well.” He told me.

I frowned, a little nervous. I was in Hell. What in the world could he want to surprise me with?

“Get the confused look off your face,” Cerberus told me with a light laugh. “I promise you’ll love this surprise.”

He pushed open a door and led me into a huge dining room. Lucifer met me as soon as I walked in. I smiled at him, an automatic reaction to seeing my beautiful king.

He grabbed my face in his hands and pressed a kiss to my lips. “Hello, my little destroyer.” He ran his eyes over me, and his lips tilted up into a devilish smirk that had me moaning as I leaned towards him, my skin heating.

“Fuck.” He swore as he gently eased me back from him with a low growl. I whimpered. “Easy, my queen.” He leaned forward and brushed his lips over mine, soothing my inner torment for a brief moment. “I have a surprise for you.”

He gently turned me, and I gasped when I saw my brother standing a few feet from me. His brown hair was messy on the top of his head, his green eyes holding warmth for me.

Tears rushed down my cheeks as I ran towards him, a sob ripping from my lips. He wrapped me up in his arms as soon as I reached him. “How are you here?” I cried, my tears burning my cheeks, but I didn’t even care.

Soft, black wings wrapped around me. I looked up at him in alarm, my body locking up with fear and uncertainty. “I’m the Angel of Death.” My lips parted in surprise. “Mom and Dad had you extremely late – hundreds of years late.” He nodded his head in Lucifer’s direction. “He helped to alter my looks though, to make me age at a rate that would not alarm you. You couldn’t know about us yet.”

I shook my head, not even finding what he told me that hard to believe. Hell, I’d turned into a demon. Anything was fucking possible anymore.

“You’re really here.” I cried.

He smiled at me and hugged me tightly again. “I’m here, Little Sis.” He drew back from me a little. “I’m here to eat dinner with you, but I have to go afterward.”

I frowned. “Do you have to?” I asked, not wanting him to leave so soon. He had always been the one family member that never treated me differently.

He nodded. “I do. I have a duty.” He told me. He pressed a kiss to the top of my head. “Lucifer will take care of you. You are his queen.”

I shook my head. “I don’t want you to go,” I told him.

Lucifer gently drew me back from him, his strong, cool arms sliding around my waist. “He will come to see you.” My king promised. “But he is the Angel of Death, my little demon. He has to continue his duty.”

“Mom?” I asked him, my voice breaking. I didn’t want my brother to leave me. “Is she okay?”

Lucifer growled, his arms tightening around me. I looked over my shoulder at him in alarm. “Your mother is trying to destroy you.” Lucifer rumbled. I spun around to face him. He gripped my waist, holding me to him. “Easy, my love.” He crooned.

“Why would she do that?” I asked him, my bottom lip trembling.

He ran his fingers over my cheek. “You killed her husband – the one that was created especially for her. She’s lost and losing her mind without him, and she wants to kill the one that killed him.”

I closed my eyes, tears searing down my skin. I was fucked up. First, I heard voices, and then, I lost myself, killing my own father. And now, my mother hated me and wanted to kill me.

“Oh, my queen,” Lucifer whispered as he wrapped his arms around me, pressing his lips to my own. They trembled beneath his. “I know it hurts. And if she were normal, she would understand how lost you were in your own torment. Both of your parents knew what you were going through and what you were capable of. Instead of letting your brother deal with it, your father wanted to. It cost him his life.”

“I never meant to hurt him,” I whispered, my voice breaking.

Lucifer kissed me – soft and slow – gently coaxing my lips apart, his kiss cooling my burning insides off. “I know you didn’t, Bela. And she knows it, too, but she’s too lost in her grief. We will keep you protected here. As of right now, she’s not using black magic to find you. She hasn’t fallen that far yet, but it’s only a matter of time.”

I gasped in shock. “My mother is a witch?” I asked incredulously.

Lucifer nodded. “And in time, you will be able to tap into your own magic as well.” He told me. I stared up at him in surprise. There was so much I didn’t know about my family – about *me*.

“What happens if she begins using black magic?” I asked him, a little terrified of the answer.

“Could be war,” Kyle answered for Lucifer. I looked at my brother over my shoulder. “Black magic is dangerous, and it brings forth things – creatures – that have been buried for centuries – things that people have decided are nothing more than myths and legends.”

“All because of me?” I choked out in disbelief.

Lucifer gripped my chin, tilting my head back so I was looking directly up at him. “Do not do that.” He warned me. “Do not lose yourself in the guilt. You were lost, my little destroyer. If anyone is to blame, it is the demons and souls of Hell for making you lose your mind.”

“I wish she didn’t hate me,” I whispered as I rested my head on his cool chest.

He tightened his arms around me. “I know, my love.”

★ ★ ★

I stood with Kyle beside the gates to Lucifer’s castle, my hand in his. I was trying not to cry. I had terribly missed my brother, and now, he was leaving again. I understood it, but it didn’t mean that I had to like it.

Because in all honesty, I really fucking hated it.

I wanted to be a selfish bitch and keep him here with me.

He gently squeezed my hand. “I have to go.” He told me.

I pulled my hand from his and hugged him tightly. “When will you come back?” I asked him.

He wrapped his arms around me, gently squeezing me to him. “As soon as I can.” He promised.

I stepped back from him, stepping right back into the cool, comforting embrace of Lucifer. Kyle smiled at me. “You’re going to be great, Sis.” He bowed to Lucifer. “My king.”

With that, he disappeared. I gripped Lucifer’s forearms in my hands, staring at the place my brother had once been standing. Kyle had promised he would come back as soon as he could, but I had a feeling in my gut that it would be a while before Kyle could come back to see me. I already missed him so much.

“It’s going to be a while, isn’t it?” I quietly asked my king.

Lucifer nuzzled my neck, gently tightening his arms around me. “Yes.” He said quietly. “But he will come back to you, my queen. Your brother would never lie to you.”

He grabbed my hand in his and led me back up the stone path to the entrance of his castle. We were silent for a few moments before I broke it. “Am I a horrible person?” I abruptly asked Lucifer. He looked down at me. “I fell in love with you – hell, that happened before I ever even laid eyes on your physical form. And I killed my father.” I drew in a deep breath. “I also allowed Cerberus to feed the darker side of me by allowing him to kill others – innocent people.” I rubbed at my chest. “And then *I* started killing.” I looked up at Lucifer. “Maybe I deserve my mother destroying me. Don’t I deserve punishment for what I’ve done?”

Lucifer’s beautiful features twisted into a demonic snarl as he roared, his wings tearing from his back, ripping his shirt to shreds as his eyes blazed with the fires of Hell. “If you want someone to blame for this shit, blame Father.” He snapped at me. I flinched back from him. “*He* chose to make one of His own creations suffer to try to get me to change my ways. It is because of *Him* that you killed your father, that you killed all of those innocent people. He should have known his plan would not work, for I will *never* lose you or give you up, my queen. I don’t care if I have to destroy humanity myself.”

Cerberus stepped outside at that moment, but my eyes were locked on my beautiful, deadly King of Hell. Lucifer lightly wrapped his hand around my neck – not hurting me – and applied the slightest bit of pressure. I licked my lips, the touch so hot and dominant that it had me desperate for him to claim me.

“You are the one good thing that Hell has to offer to anyone.” He told me. “You bring happiness to our people that they have not had in a long time. Humanity has many pleasures, but all of us here – we have suffered for a *long* time. If it makes you a monster to want to be with me, someone who will do everything in their power to make you happy – if it makes you a monster to give our people something to look forward to each day besides the tortured screams of souls, then I guess it makes you a monster.”

His lips met mine in a bruising kiss, his hand tightening momentarily on my neck before he loosened his grip again, his tongue sliding with mine. I moaned, so lost in him and his sweet words that I didn’t know my way back out. “But you are *my* monster, Bela.”

I couldn’t take it anymore.

I dug my talons into the back of his neck and yanked his face down to mine, kissing him, sliding my tongue with his.

A thunderous growl ripped from his chest as his grip tightened on my neck again. I moaned, scraping my talons across his shoulders, tearing his skin open.

“Make me yours,” I begged him.

SIX

LUCIFER

Fuck. My little demon was not waiting a second fucking longer to be claimed. And I was damn tired of denying both her and myself what we both so desperately wanted and needed.

With a growl, I gripped the backs of her thighs and lifted her before I began to stride into the castle. Her lips met mine again, a soft, needy moan crawling up the back of her throat, making my cock throb for her.

Everyone stayed out of my way as I made my way up the stairs to my wing of the castle, my lips continuously working with hers. Her perfect legs were wrapped around my hips, breathless moans and whimpers falling from those perfect lips of hers as I dug my fingers into her ass, yanking her lower body even closer to mine, letting her feel just how hard my dick was for her.

“Lucifer.” She mewled, those fucking talons digging into my shoulder blades. My back rippled, my wings begging to be released at the erotic pain she was inflicting on me.

“Fuck, I know.” I rumbled as I finally pushed open the door to my room, slamming it closed behind me. I wanted to draw out our first time together. I really fucking did, but the need to claim her was pulsing through my body like another entity was inside of me. I knew the moment I had her naked in front of me, I was going to sink inside of her perfect body and mark her back with the replica of my wings. But I couldn’t help it. Foreplay would have to happen another time.

Our souls were forcing us to finally complete the final piece to our bond – to officially mark her as my queen.

As soon as I set Bela on her feet, she quickly pulled my shirt over my head. She ran her hands over my body, her talons roughly raking over my skin as they followed the path her soft hands were taking.

I knew she was a virgin, knew no one had ever been intimate with her before, but I loved that she was losing herself with me – wanted to be one with me so badly that she could barely think past the need pulsing through her veins.

And I intended on fulfilling every little desire she had after we completed our bond.

I gripped the top of her shirt and ripped it open straight down the middle. I didn't have fucking time to waste to undress her like I normally would – like I would have liked to do. I needed her naked beneath me, screaming my fucking name as I took her body like the fucking monster that I was.

Her bra went next, and those amazing tits shook as she drew in a deep breath, her lips seeking mine out. I roughly cupped one of them, testing its weight in my hand as I kissed her hard and deeply.

She wiggled out of her leggings and panties without needing to be led. I took a step back, watching as my wicked queen bared herself before me. Her eyes nervously met mine, but she stood bravely in front of me with her hands at her sides as she drew in deep, shaky breaths.

Fuck, she was beautiful.

“You are a fucking queen, my little destroyer,” I told her as I let my eyes meet hers again. She swallowed thickly. “Do not be nervous. You're everything to me. No other person or being could ever amount to the goddess that you are in my eyes.”

Her eyes burned red at my words, her soul dancing in her eyes, begging to be burned by me, begging to be mixed with mine so she and I would finally be joined as one.

And I wasn't one to disappoint.

I was more than ready to make this queen mine.

I kicked my shoes off and unsnapped my jeans, letting them drop to the floor. I then moved towards her and quickly lifted her, laying her out on our bed. Her chest rapidly rose and fell, her hands reaching for me.

But tonight, she would not be touching me.

Tonight, she would be completely at my mercy.

I stood from the bed. "Stay there and do not move," I ordered.

She swallowed thickly but nodded her head. I strode towards our closet and pulled down a small, wooden box, opening it up to grab the rope inside. Once I was back beside the bed, I moved over her, letting my lips meet hers. She moaned, her perfect thighs opening to cradle me between them, her hips rising, desperate for me to be inside of her.

Fuck, she was so wet for me already. It made it so damn hard to not just sink inside of her.

But for our bond to be completed, my queen had to be at my mercy, completely trusting me to not hurt her.

"Not yet," I growled as I pushed her hips back down. She whined in protest but didn't raise her hips again.

I flipped her onto her stomach and pulled her arms behind her back, tying them together before I spread her legs and pulled her feet up, tying them with her hands.

She trembled, and I could feel her uncertainty through our bond.

"Easy, my little demon." I soothed as I ran my hand over her back. "For me to claim you, I need you completely at my mercy. Just trust me. I will never do anything to hurt you." I reminded her. "You're going to enjoy this, my queen."

“Okay.” She whispered, her body relaxing for me.

I slid my fingers between her folds, and a thunderous growl ripped from my chest. Despite her uncertainty and her nervousness, she was fucking soaked for me, her pussy dripping, begging for me to bury myself deep inside of her.

I grabbed my cock and lined it up with her slit, easing myself inside of her. Her body was made for me, made to accommodate whatever I gave to her.

And tonight, I planned to give her every bit of me.

Her sharp cry sounded through the room, pain slicing through my own body once I ripped through her barrier. I brushed my lips to her back and shoulders, letting my lips brush over her cheek as I waited for her body to relax, to adjust to me. I could feel the pain of her virginity being taken, and fuck if that shit didn’t hurt.

“Just breathe, my love.” I coaxed. “The pain will pass; I promise.”

Once her pain eased and her body relaxed again, I slowly began to move, giving her a moment to get used to the feeling. I was waiting to hear those perfect sounds, the ones that would mean she was dying to have more.

So, when she moaned my name, I knew she was ready.

And I proceeded to claim my queen.

★ ★ ★

Bela was passed out on her belly with her arms folded under her head, soft snores escaping her parted lips. Her entire back was burned with the outline of my massive wings, officially marking her as mine. Anyone that

came near her would be able to sense me. They didn't even have to see her mark to know who she belonged to.

I could sense Cerberus on the other side of the door before he even knocked. With a displeased grunt, I covered Bela's body up and moved towards the door. He was rubbing his chest when I opened it. "Her bond—"

"We've completed it," I told him. A genuine smile crossed his lips. "She's officially your queen."

"Everyone will want to meet their queen soon." He reminded me.

"And they will – once she goes through her last phase. Until then, she is mine to keep. I will be selfish with her as long as I can." I told him.

He laughed and shook his head before he turned away, walking back up the corridor. I closed the door and moved back to the bed to slide in next to her.

I pulled her into my arms. "Sleep well, my queen," I whispered.

★ ★ ★

BELA

Lucifer held my hand in his as he led me through a darker part of the castle. "What are you showing me?" I asked him. "I hate surprises," I grumbled.

He shook his head and rolled his eyes at me. "Woman, asking me fifty billion times is not going to make me tell you what I'm showing you." He told me for the umpteenth time.

But it didn't stop me from trying.

I huffed in aggravation, which only brought a small smile to my king's lips.

It wasn't fair that he looked so perfect.

Suddenly, loud screeching filled the air, the same screeching that used to sound through my head. I cringed back against the wall, my face screwed up in pain. Lucifer's wings ripped from his back and wrapped around me, dragging me to him, hugging me tight to his body. Cerberus appeared in front of us. "The demons are checking it out," Cerberus informed Lucifer. "But there's danger."

Lucifer looked down at me. I nervously looked up at my king. "I need you to go with Cerberus. He will keep you protected. I need to find out what the fuck is going on." He told me.

I clutched at his now ripped shirt, shaking my head. "Don't leave me," I begged him. My heart pounded hard in my chest with fear and worry – worry that something would happen to him.

I couldn't lose Lucifer.

He pressed his lips to mine in a hard kiss. I whined low in my throat. "I am immortal, my little demon. Go with Cerberus." He ordered.

He thrust me towards Cerberus. I reached for my king, my bottom lip trembling as tears burned down my cheeks. "Go," Lucifer ordered. "I will come for her when the threat is eliminated."

"Luc!" I screamed, stopping him right when he was about to disappear. I grabbed his face in my hands and leaned up on my tiptoes, pressing my lips to his in a hard, demanding kiss. He growled, his wings wrapping around me again, holding me tight to his body as he held my face in his hands.

"If you get hurt, I will destroy Hell," I warned him when we parted our lips.

He smirked at me, that smirk that lit my soul on fire and made her dance for him. “I wouldn’t expect anything less, my little destroyer.”

He disappeared. Cerberus grabbed my hand in his, pulling me back in the direction I had come with Lucifer. “Where are we going?” I asked him.

“Lucifer created a protective room for you the moment he found out about your existence,” Cerberus explained. I hurried after him, my shorter legs barely keeping up with his long-legged stride. “He and I are the only ones that know about it.” He informed me as we hurried along the corridor. “No one can get in except for you, me, and Lucifer. If they try, they’ll burn as they try to cross through the barrier.”

I tripped trying to keep up with him. With a grunt, he swept me up into his arms, his pace quickening even more. “Cerberus, will he be okay?” I asked him, so worried about Luc that it made me sick to my stomach.

“Your king will come back unscathed, my queen. Do not worry. Lucifer has been in war before and came out the victor, not a single piece of dirt on him.”

“I wish I could feel him with me,” I whispered.

“You will – soon,” Cerberus assured me. “Right now, your bond is building inside of both of you – finally completing. He can feel you. He’s always been able to feel you. But as his mark settles and heals, you will feel him as well. Everything he feels, everything he thinks, you will have access to. And once that bond cements, you will then be able to call upon everyone in Hell at your will.”

We suddenly stepped into a room. It was comfortably and tastefully designed and set up. Cerberus gently set me on my feet.

The ground shook at that moment, and Lucifer’s thunderous roar shook the castle right after. Cerberus grabbed me, keeping me from falling as he held me steady.

A scream of pain tore from my lips as I collapsed to my knees, the ground opening up beneath me. “Lucifer!” I screamed, panic clawing at my throat. All that was below me was hot, boiling lava.

Cerberus tightly wrapped his arms around me as the liquid, scorching heat engulfed us both.

Then, there was pain.

Just pain.

SEVEN

Pain.

All I could feel was excruciating pain.

And it burned.

Every time I screamed, lava filled my mouth, burning my insides. I felt like I was slowly boiling inside.

Cerberus was holding me tightly, dragging us somewhere, but he seemed completely unaffected.

I couldn't breathe. Everything hurt so fucking much.

Black spots were dancing in my vision. I was desperately hoping I would black out – that this agonizing pain and burning would finally go away.

And finally, when I thought all hope was gone, that darkness completely took me in, wrapping me up in its comfort.

Then, there was nothing.

★ ★ ★

LUCIFER

I roared out in rage. I was losing her. I could fucking feel it. All I could feel was her pain and burning. It was fucking agonizing, and that was saying something because I had an extremely high pain tolerance.

Lucifer! Cerberus suddenly shouted in my mind.

I almost collapsed where I stood in relief. I hadn't been able to locate him, either, and I'd been hoping that wherever she was, he was with her.

Where is she?! I shouted at him.

Her mother had tried entering into Hell, had distracted me from my queen just long enough to make her disappear from me – to try to kill her.

We're in the seventh circle, my king. My heart stopped in my chest. She couldn't survive that. She wasn't made for it yet. *I've gotten her up onto some rock above the lava, but she's dying.* Cerberus told me. I could hear the panic in his voice.

I appeared in the seventh circle, my roar sounding throughout the area, making the ground I was standing on shake with my rage. Demons poured out of the ground, ready to please their king. "Find my queen." I snarled.

I couldn't feel her, meaning I couldn't locate her myself. Which meant that her mind had shut down, completely blocking everyone and everything out so she would no longer be in pain.

Cerberus, where the fuck are you at? I snapped through my link with him.

I don't know. He told me honestly. *And I can't get us the fuck out of here. The only way out is through the lava, and it'll kill her if I do that. She's already barely hanging on.*

I wanted to paint the fucking earth with her mother's blood for this shit.

I closed my eyes, trying my damnest to feel her. I *needed* to feel her fucking presence. I was going to lose my fucking mind if I didn't. It was my only hope of finding her.

Then, there it was.

The tiniest, little flicker of light within me. It was barely lit, but she was fucking holding on for me.

I'm coming, my queen. I promised.

Focusing on that tiny little presence, I allowed myself to teleport to their location.

I'd never been sick before in my entire existence, but as I stared down at Bela, vomit rose in my throat. She was no longer a demon; she had human skin, and it was burned, melted in some spots to reveal the bone beneath. Her cheeks each had holes in them, and her entire body was smoking, her once beautiful hair now gone.

But, through some fucking miracle, she wasn't bleeding. I didn't know whether to be worried or thankful that she wasn't losing all of her blood. It was probably the only thing keeping her alive.

"No," I whispered hoarsely. I dropped to my knees beside her, tears sliding down my cheeks. This couldn't be happening. "My queen," I whispered, "please, fuck, hang on for me," I begged her. I gently lifted her body into my arms, cradling her close to my chest. Cerberus jumped into the lava, going on his own to get out of the seventh circle.

I wrapped my wings around Bela's body and closed my eyes, taking us to our chambers. I gently laid her body on our bed, being extra cautious to not accidentally hurt her. I wasn't feeling any of her pain, but I didn't know if her mind was blocking her pain from her or if she was still feeling it.

Silently, I called on Rufus. He was a doctor a few centuries ago before he sold his soul to me to save his family from the plague that was killing everyone at that time. With much studying, he had been able to keep up with the medical times, but he still relied heavily on herbs and natural remedies, which tended to help a lot more than medications doctors these days chose to use.

“She’s going to need antibiotics first.” He told me as soon as he stepped into the room. “Emma,” he called on his nurse, “I need an IV stand and an IV, and I’ll need it compounded with antibiotics and pain relievers. I want to keep her under as long as possible considering the extremity of her injuries.”

“Is she going to live?” I quietly asked him as I stood aside – not too far from her, though – to allow him to look over her injuries. She was completely naked due to her clothes being burnt off, but there was nothing I could do about that. I tamped my jealousy down. Now wasn’t the time nor place for the green-eyed monster inside of me to rear his ugly head. My queen needed medical attention – something I could not do for her no matter how much I wanted to.

A soft glow emitted from her back as he slowly rolled her onto her side. My mark was perfect. Not a single thing had happened to it. My eyes widened in shock.

How the fuck did this happen? And why in the hell was my mark *glowing*?

Rufus looked up at me, a small smile on his face. “Your mark is keeping our queen alive.” He told me. I breathed a sigh of relief. “She’s not leaving us, my king. She will live. It will just be a very, very long road to recovery.”

I gently sat on the end of the bed, staring at my queen. She was still so beautiful despite her burns and the condition of her body.

“How long do you predict it will take her body to begin to heal enough for you to allow her to wake?” I asked Rufus.

“It’ll be a while, my king.” He told me in an apologetic tone. I frowned. “But she will recover. It could be months before I allow our queen to wake; it all depends on how fast her body heals.”

Emma came darting back into the room with multiple towels, a medical bag, and an IV stand with an IV already dangling from it. “You’ll

need to attach it inside of her elbow for now,” Rufus instructed her. “When it gets closer to time to allow her to wake, we’ll move it to the back of her hand. Go ahead and stick her. We need to start the medications as quickly as possible.” He began to work as he spoke to Emma. “She’s not bleeding – our king’s mark is keeping that from happening. But we need to do a skin graft procedure.” He looked at me. “She doesn’t have enough skin to take from. I will need yours. You’ll heal right after due to your immortality.”

“Her body won’t reject it?” I asked him.

He shook his head. “She wears your mark. You’re the only person we could take it from without snatching a human match from Earth.”

I nodded and stood up, unfastening my jeans. “Do what you need,” I told him.

★ ★ ★

Cerberus knocked lightly on the open door before he stepped in. I had a blanket draped over my queen’s naked body. She was lying flat on her back, her chest slowly rising and falling with steady, even breaths. The medication in her IV line was keeping her knocked out.

She looked . . . peaceful . . . almost.

Cerberus dropped to his knees in front of me, bowing his head in shame. I sighed, feeling extremely tired and worn out from everything that had happened. “I am sorry I did not protect her, my king.” He said quietly.

“Off your knees,” I grunted. He looked up at me in question but obeyed my command. “You got her out of there. You didn’t leave her side. And you reached out to me the first moment you could. You saved her life, Cerberus. You’re the reason she’s laying in front of me right now.”

He was quiet for a moment, seeming conflicted with my words. “What did Rufus say?” He finally asked me, deciding to let it go, knowing better than to question my decisions.

“He’s leaving her in a coma-like state with pain medications until she begins to heal more. Letting her be awake right now would be the equivalent of being tortured in the second circle.” I told him quietly. Cerberus paled. “He did a skin graft procedure for her burns. She’s covered in bandages and ointments under this blanket. But she’s going to live. My mark is keeping her alive, and it kept her from bleeding out.”

Cerberus shook his head. “I failed my queen.” He said quietly.

“Cerberus,” I said, drawing his eyes down to me, “you did not fail her. You protected her, just as you were supposed to.”

He shook his head. “I didn’t move quickly enough.”

“You didn’t let go of her.” I countered. “You did good, Cerberus. Don’t beat yourself up over this shit.” I drew in a deep breath. “I should have known better than to leave her alone. I felt the magic in the air. I should have been smart and realized that she was in more danger away from me than she was with me.”

Cerberus sighed. “She’s going to be scarred, my king. She’s going to hate herself.”

I shook my head, reaching out to gently run my fingers over her forehead, one of the only parts of her not covered with some kind of horrible burn. “No,” I said quietly. “I will love her through all of her scars, and so will our people. She’s a warrior. She survived the seventh circle of Hell as a *human*.”

Cerberus knelt beside the bed and grabbed her hand, pressing a kiss to the back of it. “Please forgive me, my queen.” He said quietly.

He gently placed her hand back on the bed. With one last nod in my direction, he stood back up to his full height and strode from the room.

I looked over at my queen, running my eyes over her face. Leaning forward, I gently placed my lips on hers. "Sleep, my queen. I will be here waiting for you."

* * *

I watched Rufus as he changed Bela's dressings. She still looked content and peaceful, not feeling anything that he was doing to her, for which I was thankful.

If she were awake right now, she would be in agony despite her immortal state.

She had gone through her last change to become my queen. Everyone in Hell could feel her presence now, but she was still very much human despite her immortality.

Which was why she was healing so slowly.

My mark on her back was still glowing two days later, being her life support. It pulsed whenever I touched her. And now, that mark was not allowing anyone but me and Rufus to touch her. When Cerberus had tried to, he'd been knocked into the wall on the other side of the room.

Her power was beginning to make itself known, and she wasn't awake to learn how to control it.

Rufus stood up from his crouched position. "She's still healing nicely, my king. Just give her time."

I brushed the tip of my finger over her nose, watching the light as it pulsed from the mark on her back. "I have all of the time in the world for my queen," I said quietly. I looked up at the doctor. "Thank you, Rufus."

He nodded once at me, his eyes flashing with surprise, but only momentarily. I wasn't one to thank anyone for anything, but he was saving

my queen. I could never repay the debt that I would owe him for this.

“No need to thank me, my king. I would do anything in the world to help our queen.”

With that, he left the room, nodding once to Cerberus as he passed. The beast was curled up beside the foot of the bed, his three heads resting down on the floor. When demons and demonesses tried to come to visit her, he threateningly growled at them if they came within five feet of her.

He was her very own protector.

I brushed my lips with hers. “I will always wait for you, my little destroyer.” I softly promised. “For you, I have all of the time in the world,” I promised.

EIGHT

BELA

I didn't know that it was possible to be in this much physical pain.

Everything hurt.

I slowly opened my eyes, staring up at the ceiling. I could feel Lucifer's presence, but I couldn't seem to find the strength inside of myself to make my head move to find him.

I softly groaned, hoping to grab my king's attention. I needed help. My throat was dry, and my mouth felt like I had been chewing on cotton balls. And I couldn't figure out how to move my fucking body.

"Bela?" Lucifer asked as he sat up next to me, his hair messy on the top of his head, his eyes bleary with sleep. I slowly blinked up at him. "Holy shit, you're fucking awake." He got off the bed and strode away from me. I followed him with my eyes until I couldn't see his muscular frame anymore.

Why in the hell couldn't I move my body?

A few moments later, he was right back by my side with a glass of water and a straw. "Here – let me help you sit up." He set the cup on the bedside table and grabbed me under my arms, gently easing my body into a sitting position. A moan of pain slipped from me. His eyes flashed with pain on my behalf. "I know, my queen." He brushed his lips to my cheek. "I'm sorry. Whatever medication Rufus gave you, it's kind of paralyzed you to keep you from immediately harming yourself when you woke up." He sat on the edge of the bed facing me and grabbed the glass of water. He put the straw at my lips and with his help, I was able to swallow the cool liquid, relieving that dry feeling in my mouth and throat.

A demon entered the room wearing a suit with a white lab coat. There was a blonde demoness behind him wearing scrubs. The demon smiled at me. "It's good to finally see our queen awake." He greeted. "I am Rufus, and this," he said, gesturing to the blonde demoness at his side, "is my nurse, Emily. We've been in charge of your care since Lucifer brought you out of the seventh circle."

"Can you give her a medication to reverse the effects of the temporary paralysis you put on her?" Lucifer asked him. "She can't move yet."

Emily walked forward and gently extended my arm. I closed my eyes, swallowing down my sound of pain. Lucifer's hand brushed my cheek, and I slowly opened my eyes, looking up at him. I groaned when I felt a needle slide through my skin, and a moment later, cool liquid rushed through my veins.

"Give that a few minutes to kick in, and then she should be able to move just fine," Rufus told Lucifer. Lucifer slowly pulled his blood-red eyes from mine and looked up at Rufus. "If you want to bathe her, only sponge baths for the time being. I still don't recommend submerging her body in any kind of water until she's healed some more."

Just how badly was I injured?

Lucifer reached up and played with the ends of my hair that now seemed to stop somewhere near my shoulders. A low whine crawled up from the back of my throat. Had I lost all of my hair?

"My hair." I rasped, looking at my king, knowing he wouldn't lie to me.

He gave me a sad smile. "Your hair had to regrow." He told me sadly. I frowned. "You were badly burned, my queen. It's honestly a miracle that you survived."

"How did I?" I asked him as Rufus and Emily left the room, giving us privacy.

“My mark on your back saved your life.” He told me. “It’s literally the *only* thing that kept you alive.”

“I want to see how bad it is,” I told him.

He frowned but nodded his head. I watched him as he stood up and moved to the door, closing us into the room. He then walked back to me and gently lifted my shirt over my head for me. Tears poured down my cheeks as I stared down at my body.

I was *never* going to look the same again.

I had been burned almost *everywhere*. Some parts of me were almost healed, while others still had quite a bit of a way to go. “No, my queen.” Lucifer rasped as he pulled me into his arms. I whined in pain, my shoulders shaking as I began to cry. “You’re still perfect. No one can ever compare to the beautiful fucking goddess that you are in my eyes.” He brushed his lips to my temple. “Don’t do this to yourself, my little destroyer.” He begged me. “You’ll always be the only one for me in my eyes, and I will love and cherish every single part of you – even the parts of you that you feel are vile and disgusting.”

I just cried. Though I had obviously gained back my human skin, had almost become perfect for him once again – now, I was ruined.

I would never be worthy of someone like Lucifer.

★ ★ ★

I slowly lifted my head from Lucifer’s shoulder when I noticed Cerberus walking into our chambers. He smiled when he saw me, but I didn’t return it. I felt so horrible. My body ached, and on top of that, so did my heart. Lucifer was stuck with someone like me to be his queen.

Lucifer growled softly in his throat, quickly picking up on my thoughts.

“It’s so good to see you awake again after so long, my queen.” Cerberus greeted. He grabbed my hand, pressing a kiss to the back of it before he gently set it back in my lap. “How are you feeling?”

I shrugged, grimacing afterward. “I’m still in pain,” I told him honestly. Lucifer tightened his arm around me for a moment, his hand grabbing mine in my lap as he leaned his head down to press a kiss to the top of my head. I closed my eyes, taking in every bit of comfort that my king was offering me. “But I’ll be fine,” I assured him.

He sighed. “I am sorry that I did not protect you better, my queen.” He told me. There was so much pain and guilt in his voice that it tore at my soul.

“I remember you being there with me,” I told him. His eyes widened in shock. A shudder wracked my frame as I remembered the pain – the burning – screaming for help only for my insides to feel like they were burning as well. “You never let go of me,” I told him. “I’m probably sitting here right now because of you, so don’t feel guilty, Cerberus. You still did your job as my protector – you kept me alive.”

I looked up at my king, only to find his eyes already trained on me. “Any word on my mother?” I asked him.

He shook his head at me. “No, my love, I’m afraid not. Cerberus and Kyle have been searching high and low for her, but she’s gone into hiding, and she’s hiding well. So, we’ve all made the decision that I am to stay by your side, no matter what happens here. This way, if she decides to attack again, there’s a much lesser chance of something happening to you.”

I frowned, my mind going to my mother – how I had hurt her by killing my father. I’d ripped her love away from her. I couldn’t really blame her for her reaction. If I lost Lucifer, I knew with every fiber of my being that I would react much worse.

“Easy, my queen.” Lucifer soothed as a golden light suddenly pulsed from my body. I stared up at him in horror as he grabbed my hands in his,

keeping me steady and calm. “Take a deep breath, my little destroyer. It’s going to be okay.”

“What just happened?” I asked him, fear tinting my voice.

“Your magic began to release itself – coming to the surface – after you went through your final transition. I’ve been trying to keep it at bay, but it seems to have a mind of its own, and now, it’s affected by your emotions.”

“I could hurt you?” I asked him, my heart rate spiking. I didn’t want to hurt him – or anyone here, actually.

“No.” He soothed. “You cannot hurt me.” He promised. “But I have to keep your emotions grounded and controlled because you *can* hurt everyone else.” He warned me. Tears burned in my eyes. He leaned down and brushed his lips with mine, soothing me – calming me again. “I’m not leaving your side, my love. You won’t have the opportunity to accidentally hurt anyone here.” He promised.

“How do I gain control of them?” I asked him.

“Practice and training – *after* you are fully healed.” He told me, his eyes narrowing on my face when I opened my mouth to protest. I knew I was still healing and that I was still in pain, but I didn’t want to wait. “As for right now, I am perfectly content with helping you stay controlled.”

I looked at Cerberus. “Have I accidentally hurt you yet?” I asked him, fearing the answer.

He gave me an easy smile. “I touched you, and your power sent me crashing through the wall, but all is well, my queen.” He assured me. I shook my head. “Lucifer has been doing his best to keep them at bay.” He shrugged. “It didn’t even hurt.” He promised.

“I’m sorry,” I told him. He sighed, shaking his head at me. “No, you’ve been doing your best to help take care of me, Cerberus – I know you have. You didn’t deserve that.” I told him. Lucifer squeezed my shoulders and

pressed his lips to my temple, calming me again when my light shimmered.

He laughed. “My queen, you have a lot to learn about magic.” He told me. He flashed me an easy-going grin when I only continued to frown at him. “Tell you what – if you want to make it up to me,” Lucifer growled, but Cerberus ignored him, “then get some rest, make sure you stay hydrated and eat three square meals a day, and let my king take care of you.” He told me.

I sighed. “Cerberus, that’s not—”

“Aht.” He said, holding up a hand. “Do those things, and everything will be right once again in our world.” He smiled at me before he shifted into his beast and walked out of the room, using one of his snake tails to close the door behind him.

“Did he just—”

Lucifer laughed softly. “He did, my queen.” He pressed his lips to my cheek, drawing me back against his side. “Get some rest.” He ordered. “That’s the best thing to help you heal right now.”

I sighed as I situated myself into a more comfortable position against his body with a small moan of pain as I moved. Lucifer tightened his arms around me. “Sleep, my queen.” He said softly, his own eyes closing.

“You promise to rest as well?” I asked him. I wasn’t stupid. I knew he hadn’t been taking care of himself.

He smiled, not opening his eyes. “If it will make you go to sleep, then, yes, my queen; I promise to rest as well.”

I smiled as I draped my arm over his waist. He sighed in contentment, his body relaxing further. A golden light hummed right above my skin – just the lightest of shimmers. Lucifer gently ran his hand up and down my back. I tensed. “Don’t worry.” Lucifer soothed. “It just means your content. Get some rest.”

“It’s not hurting you?” I asked him.

He laughed softly. “No, my love, it’s not. It actually feels good against my skin.” He gently tilted my head back and covered my lips with his. I softly sighed into the kiss, easily losing myself in him. “Sleep, my queen.”

NINE

A couple of weeks had passed, and they had passed at a drastically slow rate. My healing process felt like it was taking forever, though Lucifer assured me every day that I was healing more and more.

It sure as hell didn't feel like it, though.

"Come on, my little destroyer." Lucifer coaxed as he held his hands out to me. I pouted, bringing a smile to his face that warmed my soul. "Up you go, my queen. You need to begin walking again and using your muscles."

I whined. "Everything still kind of hurts, Lucifer." I reminded him.

He leaned down and tenderly brushed his lips with mine before he pressed a soft kiss to my cheek that had my soul dancing for him. "I know, my queen. Just take deep breaths and remember that I'm right beside you to catch you if you need me to." His blood-red eyes met mine, soothing my soul and my fear of trying to walk again. "I know everything still hurts, Bela. I can feel everything you feel." He reminded me. I frowned. I hated that he could feel my pain. He crooked his finger under my chin and tilted my head back so I was looking up at him again. "But it's going to hurt more later on if you don't start moving again. Your body is already extremely weak from the months you spent in a medically induced coma to heal."

I sighed, knowing he was right. It didn't mean that I liked it, but I understood it. Wincing in pain, I allowed my king to pull me up off of the bed. He brushed his lips to my forehead as he gripped my hips, steadying me on my feet. I whimpered as I gripped his shoulders, my knees shaking from the strain of trying to support my weight. "Easy, my love." Lucifer soothed. "I've got you. I'm not going to let you hurt yourself." He assured me.

“You promise?” I asked him. I knew that I didn’t have to question what he said. When it came to me, Lucifer was a man of his word. But I was scared, and my entire body was aching.

“Bela, you know you don’t ever have to worry about me allowing you to get hurt.” He reminded me. “I will never let you fall.” He promised.

“Okay,” I whispered. He took a step backward, his hands still firm and steady on my hips. I cautiously took a step forward, a whine of pain tearing past my lips as I did so. His eyes burned a bright red at my pain, but he only clenched his jaw and walked me a couple of more steps away from the edge of the bed. Every step was like fucking agony, but I forced myself to push forward. Lucifer was smiling at me, speaking gentle words of encouragement as I continued to move forward with him at a slow but steady pace.

I squeaked in shock when Cerberus suddenly pressed his beast right against my back, helping Lucifer keep me upright while also being there to catch me if I were to fall. I breathed a sigh of relief, relaxing a little bit now that I had a little bit of extra support for my pain-filled legs.

“You’re doing amazing, my queen.” Lucifer praised. I smiled at him, my light shimmering just above my skin at his praise, and his eyes softened in response.

“Every step is like agony,” I told him as we stepped into the stone hallway of the castle that was outside of our room.

“I know, my queen. I wish that I could take all of this pain away for you. I hate that you’re suffering and that I’m helpless to do anything for you.” He admitted, his voice rough.

“It’s going to be okay.” I tried assuring him, though I felt like I was saying that for not only him but for me, too. I took another step forward, my knee almost giving out on me, but Lucifer held tight while Cerberus pressed more against me, both of them keeping me upright as I regained my balance. “How much further?” I asked him, exhaustion and pain filtering into my voice.

“Not much further, my little destroyer.” Fuck, I loved that name, and I would never grow tired of hearing it. “We’re just going to the library, and once we are there, you will have breakfast, and then, Kyle is going to work with you to teach you how to tap into your powers and bring them forth at your will.”

I groaned. “Can’t it wait until I heal first?” I begged him. God, I was so tired already. My body was screaming at me to just sit down and rest.

“No, my love. I’m sorry.” He apologized. I groaned. “I wish you could, but we don’t know when your mother is planning to make her next move, and I need you to be prepared for anything that might happen. That means we need to get as much control over your powers that we can as soon as possible.” He told me. I huffed. He wanted to do it now – not when I originally *wanted* to. “I wish shit could just be simple for us so that I can just spend my time loving you properly,” my cheeks flamed red at his words, “but unfortunately, it has to be this way for now.”

I nodded in understanding. A breath of relief passed through my lips when we finally stepped into the library where my brother was already sitting in a chair, waiting for us. There was a plate of pancakes and bacon on the small table in front of him. I licked my lips as my stomach rumbled. Lucifer’s lips twitched in amusement as he eased me down onto the chair.

He pecked my lips before he pulled the table closer to me so that I could eat. I didn’t realize that I was so hungry until I took the first bite of my pancake, and I moaned around the sugary sweet goodness.

Fucking Heaven in Hell.

“Any update on your mother yet?” Lucifer asked Kyle.

Kyle shook his head. “She’s still laying low as fuck.” He answered. “Unfortunately, all we can do right now is just wait for her to come out of hiding. But since she’s hiding, it gives me time to work with Bela.”

Cerberus shifted into human form, and I kept my eyes away from him until he announced that he had on jeans. He took a seat next to me – always my protector. “Which she’s not happy to be doing, by the way,” Cerberus commented.

Kyle sighed, ever the serious one. “We can’t waste any more time than we already have.” He told me.

I finished chewing my food. “You act as if I was wasting time before.” I snapped at him, getting defensive. “If I remember correctly, I was in a fucking coma and trying to heal.”

“Easy, my little destroyer.” Lucifer soothed, his blood-red eyes meeting mine as he lightly gripped my chin, tilting my face up to look at him. “Your power is touching me. Calm down.”

I sighed and wordlessly continued to eat my food once Lucifer released my chin from his grip. Everyone stayed silent, and no one spoke until a demoness came and took my plate away.

“Close your eyes, Bela,” Kyle commanded.

With a disgruntled sigh, I obediently closed my eyes. “I want you to look deep within yourself.” He told me. “I want you to locate the part of you where your magic is stored.”

A frown pulled at my lips. “How will I know what it looks like?” I asked him.

“Everyone’s is different.” He told me. “But you’ll know it when you find it.” He assured me.

Drawing in a deep breath, I forced my body to relax as I searched inside of myself for whatever the hell Kyle was talking about. My eyes almost flew open in surprise when I actually found a small, golden orb, but I kept my eyes firmly shut. “What now?” I asked quietly.

“See if you can grab it with your mind,” Kyle told me, his voice low, allowing me to keep my concentration. “Picture trying to utilize it and see what happens.”

I tried doing what he said over and over, but every time I got close to finally having it within my grasp, it slithered away, almost as if it weren’t ready for me to touch it or use it yet.

“This is stupid.” I snapped as I opened my eyes. “I can’t fucking grab it. This is a waste of time.”

“Keep trying,” Kyle ordered.

“I have been!” I yelled at him, getting angry and frustrated. Golden light pulsed around me, but Lucifer moved as quickly as light, and he wrapped his arms around me, absorbing all of my power. He softly growled in response as it knocked into him before he slowly released me.

I watched as my king knelt before me on the floor, and he rubbed his hands over my thighs. “Close your eyes.” He softly commanded.

Sighing in defeat, I closed my eyes again. “You’re safe.” He told me softly. “We just want you to become the greatest you can be so you can protect yourself and those that you love and care about.” His voice was still soft and soothing, calming me in a way only he was capable of doing.

“Try grabbing it again, my queen.”

It was easy to locate the orb, and this time, it stayed still, allowing me to grab it with my mind. I gasped in surprise and opened my eyes, looking down at my king. He grinned. “Fucking beautiful.” He breathed. “Your eyes are glowing golden.” He stood up and leaned down, grabbing my face in his hands to kiss me. “You just needed to feel safe – that’s all. You should be able to tap into it anytime now.”

Kyle grinned and grabbed a rope and a book that had to be an entire twelve inches thick and dropped them onto the table in front of me with a

loud thud. “Now the real fun begins. You’re going to untie a knot.” He informed me.

I frowned at him. “That’s easy,” I muttered.

“With your mind,” Lucifer told me. “You’re going to use your magic to untie the knot – not your hands.”

“Oh, boy,” I whispered. Cerberus laughed at my expense, but Lucifer knocked him off of his chair, this time making me laugh.

I stuck my tongue out at my beast. “Serves you right.” I teased.

Cerberus laughed at me. “Always ready to serve, my queen.”

I rolled my eyes. “Go find me a snack,” I told him. “I’m hungry.”

He scoffed. “What do I look like – your personal maid?” He pressed a kiss to the top of my head as he passed me, making Lucifer growl. I reached over and grabbed my king’s hand, instantly calming him. He knew Cerberus didn’t mean anything by it, but it didn’t stop him from being jealous, nonetheless. “Coming right up, my queen. Water or soda?” He asked.

“Water,” I told him. I smiled up at Cerberus, feeling extremely happy now that I had successfully tapped into my power. “Thank you.”

He flashed me an easy-going smile before he dipped out of the room. Lucifer dropped onto the chair Cerberus had just been sitting in. “If I didn’t know Cerberus like the back of my hand, I’d rip his head off of his fucking shoulders for that stunt.”

I smiled at my king. “You know I only have eyes for you.” I reminded him.

He flashed me a sexy grin that had every nerve ending in my body lighting on fire before he leaned over and took my lips in a soft, sweet kiss. “I love you, my queen.”

I swooned. How was someone so bad so damn perfect?

“And I love you,” I promised. I looked at my brother. “Let’s get this bullshit over with.”

TEN

I sat between Lucifer's legs on the couch in the library as I focused on untying the knot. Kyle had tried teaching me the spells, but it seemed as if my magic was different from normal witches.

It worked solely by what I willed it to do. Spells didn't work for me. I had to personally connect with my magic.

I began to feel the rope slowly untie in my hands. I stayed focus as I opened my eyes, watching as I willed one end to slide back through the loop before I straightened it out in my hands solely with my mind.

"Holy shit," I whispered. Lucifer leaned forward and settled his chin on my shoulder. "I fucking did it," I said quietly in astonishment. "I really fucking did it."

Lucifer pressed a kiss to my neck. "You sure as fuck did." He praised. "Proud of you, my queen." My light shimmered at his praise. "You're growing stronger. I can feel your power vibrating through my own body."

Kyle suddenly appeared in the room, the tips of his massive, black wings trailing the floor behind him. I stared up at him in alarm. He was supposed to come back for some more training, but the fact that he was in his Angel of Death form meant that something had happened – something bad and dangerous.

"We've got a huge fucking problem," Kyle stated. Lucifer quickly maneuvered himself out from behind me and stood up, the room turning ice cold. I shivered and crossed my arms tight over my chest.

"What the fuck is going on, Kyle?" Lucifer snarled.

Cerberus sat beside me on the floor where I was settled on the couch. A low rumble sounded from his chest. I silently reached forward and

scratched behind one of his six ears, my eyes focused on my brother and my king.

“I finally tracked Mother down,” Kyle informed us. My breath hitched in my throat, my eyes widening with fear. “I tried to fucking stop her – but fuck! She got into Hell.” Kyle told Lucifer. Cerberus released a vicious snarl, the snakes of his tail hissing.

“I didn’t feel her!” Lucifer roared, shaking the walls as his wings ripped from his back. I squeaked in shock, my heart pounding hard in my chest.

“She’s using black magic,” Kyle told him. “Black magic – it makes shit that normally wouldn’t be possible fucking possible. There’s no fucking telling where she’s at right now. I can’t sense her.”

“Goddammit!” Lucifer roared. “Father is behind this. I fucking know he is. He doesn’t want me with Bela. She was supposed to only be a chance at redemption for me, to be my chance to gain back my white wings and go back up to Heaven.”

“You really think he would give Mother access to fucking black magic over something like this?” Kyle asked in disbelief. “Doesn’t seem like Him.”

Lucifer snorted. “Well, it’s certainly not me like so many of his precious fucking humans would like to believe, now is it? I don’t even have the fucking power to create shit on Earth like so many of them have been led to believe.”

“Luc.” I softly called. He turned to look at me. “Yelling about it isn’t going to help solve this problem.” I gently reminded him, being his voice of reason. “We need to set some kind of plan in place.”

Spoken like a true queen, my lady. Cerberus spoke into my mind.

I scratched behind his ear again as I kept my gaze focused on my king. “Cerberus, stay with Bela. I need to call forth all of my guardians – set a

protection detail into place around this castle and Bela.”

“Are you leaving?” I asked him, fear making my skin crawl as I remembered what happened the last time that he left me while my mother was in Hell.

“Not a chance, my little destroyer,” Lucifer promised. “I’m not leaving this room.” He assured me. I breathed a sigh of relief. He turned to Kyle. “Find Asmodeus. Tell him I need to meet with him here in the library. And then I need you to continue searching Hell – see if you can locate your mother.”

Kyle nodded once and disappeared from the room. Lucifer leaned down and gripped my chin in his large, calloused hand. His touch was ice cold, much colder than it normally was. “I will rip her the fuck apart before she puts you through any more pain.” He swore.

“And you?” I quietly asked him. He arched an eyebrow at me in question. “What about your safety and protection, Luc?”

A humorous smirk tilted his lips, making me scowl. “My queen, I am the inflictor of pain. Father has made me fucking immortal in every way. It’s not me he’s aiming to hurt and kill. It is you.” He brushed his lips with mine. “So, do not worry about me, my little destroyer. I will be perfectly fine.” He promised.

★ ★ ★

A massive man stepped into the library, and my eyes widened in alarm at his size. I’d never seen someone so big. He had to be about seven feet tall, and his eyes were black – soulless. Ripped, burned wings protruded from his back. He was so muscular that his veins stood out against his skin.

He turned his eyes to me. “My queen.” He said in greeting, his voice rough. The smell of smoke filtered into the room as he spoke. He looked at

Lucifer. “My king. I was summoned by the Angel of Death.”

“We have an intruder in Hell,” Lucifer informed him. A rumble of displeasure sounded from Asmodeus’s chest, shaking the floor with the vibration. “I need a protection detail put on the castle, and I need more guardians posted at the gates.”

“I’ll put my best guardians here,” Asmodeus answered immediately. Lucifer nodded in agreement. “I suggest having four with the queen wherever she may be, even if you and Cerberus are with her.”

“I can agree with that,” Lucifer told him. “With that being said, I would like you to be one of the four that is with her, and your best guardian will need to take your place when you are doing your rounds.”

“It would be my honor, my king,” Asmodeus told him as he respectfully bowed his head to Luc.

“Bela is injured at the moment, and walking is a bit of a task,” Lucifer informed him. He walked over to me and gently placed his hand on my shoulder. “Can you stand, my queen?”

I nodded and placed my hands in his, wincing and biting my lip to hold in my whine of pain. Cerberus instantly placed himself behind my legs once I was standing, ready to catch me if I were to fall. Drawing in a deep breath, I turned to Asmodeus and held my much smaller hand out to him. “Hello, Asmodeus.” I greeted.

He knelt to one knee and grabbed my hand in his, pressing a light kiss to my fingers before pressing his forehead there. “It is a pleasure, my queen. I look forward to serving you and protecting you.” He told me.

“Thank you,” I told him, meaning it from the bottom of my soul.

Asmodeus stood back up and looked at Lucifer as my king eased me back down onto the couch. Asmodeus frowned and looked back at me. “Apologies if I am overstepping boundaries, my queen, but I sense magic and power – lots of it.”

“I am apparently a witch,” I told him with a tiny shrug. “I’m just now learning how to tap into it, and it’s been a bit of a task.”

He looked to Lucifer. “I sensed magic earlier today. The magic from our queen is not the same magic I sensed earlier. Hers is purer and sweet. This one – it was dark. Black magic.”

Lucifer growled. I grabbed his hand, doing my best to keep him calm. He linked our fingers together, flickering his blood-red eyes down to me for a moment before focusing back on Asmodeus. “You did not think to come to me about it?” Lucifer angrily demanded.

“I was trying to track it, my king. Coming to you would have taken me away from the trail.” Asmodeus answered, not at all intimidated by the King of Hell like so many others normally were.

“Where did it end?” Lucifer demanded to know.

“It has not ended yet. I had my best tracker take over when the Angel of Death told me I was needed here. He is still tracking it.”

Lucifer nodded once before turning to look down at me. “You look exhausted, my love.” He knelt and lifted me from the couch, his wings wrapping around me once I was cradled against his chest. “Call your other three guardians and communicate to the rest of your demons of the changes taking place. I need her guards outside of our chambers immediately. Nothing will happen to my queen while that bitch is here in Hell.”

“I will follow,” Asmodeus told him. “And I will stand guard. I will also hold my meeting outside of your chambers. We will be silent – the queen will not be disturbed from her rest.” Asmodeus assured him.

I rested my head on Lucifer’s shoulder. “What is going to happen?” I asked my king.

“I do not know for sure, my queen.” He said softly, and that knowledge sounded like it bothered him a lot. “But I will protect you. Of that, you can be sure.” He promised.

ELEVEN

LUCIFER

I slowly opened my eyes as Kyle stepped into my chambers. His eyes flickered to his little sister for a moment before he focused them back on me. “Nothing.” He quietly informed me, letting me know he was not able to track her.

I nodded once. “Asmodeus has trackers on her,” I informed him. His eyes widened in shock and disbelief. “Asmodeus sensed her, and he was tracking her when you found him. He put his best trackers on her trail before he came here.”

“Well, shit,” Kyle muttered. “How the fuck can he sense her and I can’t?”

I shrugged. “He’s the King of Demons – one of the most powerful beings there is besides the man upstairs.” I reminded him. “He can sense shit that we can’t.”

Kyle sighed. “How is she?” He asked as he looked back over at Bela.

I shrugged. “Tired,” I informed him. “She’s been asleep basically since you left,” I told him. “She needs her rest. Shit has been rough for her lately, not to mention the strain she’s been under while trying to deal with her pain and learn how to wield her power at the same time.”

He leaned down and pressed a kiss to her hairline before he nodded once at me and disappeared from my chambers. With a tired sigh, I rolled over and wrapped my arm around Bela’s waist, holding her in my protective embrace. I brushed my lips to the back of her head before I shut my own eyes, falling asleep.

★ ★ ★

I sighed in irritation as Kyle appeared in our chambers again. Bela lightly smacked my arm as she smiled up at her brother. One of these days, these people were going to burst into our chambers and get a show they didn't want to see.

The demoness that served Bela her food every day silently slipped into the room and took the breakfast tray before she quickly slipped out of the room again.

"I was up all night researching to see if there was a way that I could help Bela heal." He instantly began.

I silently arched an eyebrow at him. Bela slightly tilted her head to the side in curiosity. "Well, did you find out anything?" She asked him.

He nodded. "I can heal you." He informed her. I breathed a sigh of relief, thankful that she would finally find relief from all of the pain that her burns were putting her in. "The only downside, though, is that it's going to be extremely painful for you. There's no way around it if I'm going to heal you."

"No." I instantly snapped. I would not put her through more pain – not even if it would heal her. She was already still hurting enough as it was. "I'm not going to allow you to put her in more pain. It's out of the fucking question."

"My king, she fucking needs this," Kyle argued. "It's only a matter of time before Mother tries to make her strike against Bela, and Bela needs to be in her best shape to face her if it comes to that."

"It *won't* fucking come to that," I growled at him, my red eyes glowing with rage.

"Luc," Bela softly called. I turned my eyes to hers. She pressed her hand against my cheek, cupping my face in her small, soft hand, "Kyle is

right.” I clenched my jaw. “We can’t predict what may happen. I need to be in the best shape possible. He needs to heal me so that can happen. If I have to go through an immense amount of pain for a little while to finally be out of the pain I’m constantly in, then I’ll do that.”

“No.” I snapped at her.

She narrowed her eyes at me, a challenging glint shining in her eyes. Fuck, if I wasn’t so adamant about fighting her on this, I might have been damn proud of her for standing up against me like this.

“Yes.” She retorted. “If you don’t like it, Lucifer, I will force Asmodeus to keep you out of the room while Kyle heals me.” She warned. I narrowed my eyes at her. This woman was playing dirty, and she was determined to get her damn way. “So, which is it?”

I glared at her. “You’re playing a dangerous game, my little destroyer.” I quietly warned her.

She tilted her chin up in a defiant gesture. “Try me, my king.” She bravely retorted.

I blew out a harsh breath, backing down, letting her have what she wanted. “You drive me fucking mad, my queen,” I growled. I pressed my lips to hers before I got off of the bed and nodded once at Kyle. “Do what is necessary,” I ordered.

He moved over towards his sister. “Can I trust you not to interrupt me?” He asked me. “Because I know you’ll feel what she feels, my king, and I cannot have interruptions.”

I clenched my jaw, knowing I couldn’t promise that. “Asmodeus,” I called.

Asmodeus stepped into the room. “My king, you summoned.”

I clenched my fists at my sides. “I need you to keep me from interrupting the Angel of Death by any means necessary, even if you have

to forcibly remove me from the room. Your queen wishes to be healed. It will be extremely painful, but this is what she wants. I'll rip his head from his fucking shoulders if given the opportunity." Kyle flinched. He knew I meant what I said.

Asmodeus nodded once at me. "As you wish, my king."

"Asmodeus," Bela called from the bed as she laid down with a wince. Kyle knelt on the floor beside the bed. "Do not hurt my king." I smiled. She was so stubbornly protective, and I loved it.

He nodded once. "You have my word, my queen."

Kyle placed his hands on the sides of my queen's head and closed his eyes. Pain sliced through my body, specifically in the areas that were still in the critical parts of healing. She screamed at the same time a roar ripped from my throat, my wings ripping from my back. Asmodeus grabbed my arms, restraining me and keeping me from ripping Kyle limb from limb like every fiber of my being was urging me to do.

I wanted to fucking kill him for doing this to her.

Cerberus stood in front of me in his human form, a growl ripping from his throat. "Stand down," Asmodeus ordered him. "Your queen asked for this."

"Make it stop!" Bela screamed. She sobbed, tears rolling down her cheeks. "It hurts!"

I roared again, the pain intensifying. I dropped to my knees, helpless to do anything for her. She had wanted this, and I knew she would be extremely pissed if I used my title to force them to stop.

Asmodeus followed me down to the floor, his hands still restraining my arms as my roars matched my queen's screams, agony ripping through both of us.

★ ★ ★

Bela panted as Kyle finally removed his hands from the sides of her head. She was covered in sweat, her dress clinging to her body. Her entire body was trembling, but she was completely healed.

“Luc.” She croaked.

Asmodeus instantly released me, and I rushed towards her, cupping her beautiful, perfect face in my hands. “Oh, my love,” I whispered. I kissed her slow and deep, my lips working with hers. “Fucking hell, that was torture. How are you feeling?”

“Sore.” She honestly admitted. “But I feel okay otherwise.”

“Leave us,” I ordered everyone in the room.

Once she and I were alone, I quickly stripped her out of her dress and carried her to our bathroom. After gently setting her healed body into the jacuzzi-style tub, I turned the water on so she could begin to soak as quickly as possible. After stripping out my own clothes, I slid into the tub behind her, holding her tight against me. She closed her eyes, a content sigh leaving her lips. She yawned shortly after.

“Are you sure you’re okay, my queen?” I asked her.

She nodded, another yawn falling from her lips. “I’m okay.” She sleepily assured me.

I traced one of my fingers over one of the scars on her arm before I brought it up to my lips, pressing a kiss there. “One day, when you’re not feeling so sore from being healed, I am going to make sweet love to you, and I’m going to kiss every single scar on your body,” I promised.

Her body trembled at my words. “I haven’t looked at them.” She admitted. “I’m afraid of what I’ll see.”

I brushed my lips with hers. “You are still perfect to me, my queen,” I promised. “You will never be anything less than perfection in my eyes,” I assured her.

I slid my hand over her perfect body, rubbing my thumb over the scars that I felt as I did. I groaned softly as my hand finally slipped between her thighs. She moaned, her legs spreading, opening up more to me.

“My love, you are still recovering.” I rasped, but fuck, it was so tempting to just dip my fingers inside of her.

“Please, Lucifer.” She begged me. “It has been so long since I have been without your touch – without being one with you like this again.”

“Fuck.” I swore as I gently turned her to face me. I gripped her chin, forcing her eyes on mine. “Are you sure this is what you want, my queen?”

“Yes.” She mewled. “Please, Luc.”

I lined my cock up with her slit before I gently pulled her down over me. I held her tightly and gently thrust up into her, making sweet love to her. And I didn’t stop until her body was shaking uncontrollably, both of us unable to go any longer, sleep tugging us both towards darkness.

“So perfect, my little destroyer,” I whispered in her ear before I nipped at her earlobe and lifted her exhausted body out of the bath.

“And so addicting, my king.” She sleepily whispered back. “I love you, Luc.”

A tender smile crossed my lips as I looked down at her. “And I love you, my queen,” I promised. “For the rest of our days – for the rest of eternity – my heart and soul belong to you.”

TWELVE

BELA

Two weeks had passed since my mother had gotten her way into Hell. The trackers were still tailing her, but she was always just a little bit ahead of them.

Asmodeus was always close to me, kind of like a towering presence, always casting a comforting shadow over me. It was beginning to annoy Lucifer some, especially since the other demons that were normally with us during my training sessions were beginning to also draw too close for his liking, but he kept his mouth shut about it.

As long as I was protected, he would put up with it.

I was in the middle of a circle that Asmodeus's guardians had formed. Lucifer was standing next to me, and Asmodeus was standing directly behind me. Kyle was on the other side of the ring in his Angel of Death form.

I hadn't been feeling all that great today, but these days, every peaceful second was precious, and I needed to train. I would deal with the churning of my stomach if it meant I could grow a little bit stronger and a little more connected with my powers.

"Focus, Bela," Kyle told me when I lost my concentration again, my stomach lurching.

"Easy, my love." Lucifer soothed as he lightly gripped the sides of my waist from behind me. "This is why I wanted you to just rest today. You don't feel well."

I sighed. I knew he meant well, but we both knew what one day of rest could cost us.

It could cost us each other.

“I have to do this,” I told him. I swallowed down my vomit and drew in a deep breath, closing my eyes again. I held my hands in the position Kyle had shown me and focused, trying to draw part of that orb inside of me between my hands.

My stomach lurched again, making me lose my focus for the umpteenth time. Lucifer softly growled. “Break.” He ordered. I squeaked in shock when Asmodeus suddenly put a bench right beside me. Lucifer eased me down onto it, nodding once at Asmodeus in thanks. “My little destroyer, you’re pale,” Luc commented. He kneeled in front of me, his hands reaching up to cup my face. “Are you sure you won’t take a break today?” He asked me. “I hate seeing you like this, my queen. You look like the slightest breeze is going to blow you over.”

I gave him a small smile to try to ease his nerves as I reached out and trailed the tips of my fingers along his jaw. I knew it wouldn’t work, though, since he could feel what I was feeling, but it wouldn’t stop me from trying. “Luc, I am fine. Stop worrying so much, my king. You will worry yourself into a small coma.”

His lips twitched with a smile. He grabbed my wrist and turned his head, pressing a tender kiss to my palm. I knew my soul danced in my eyes for him. “I love you, my queen. I will always worry.”

“Oh, Luc,” I whispered. “I love you, too, my king.”

“I sense an angel.” Asmodeus suddenly informed us. Lucifer jerked up into a standing position. Cerberus transformed into his beast, a thundering growl sounding from his chest. My brother appeared behind me, his wings softly brushing my shoulders.

“Who?” Lucifer growled at Asmodeus.

“Hello, brother.” A man suddenly spoke up as he appeared in the circle. He had blonde hair and blue eyes with skin so pale that if he’d been

a human, you would have assumed he was dead.

The guardians hissed, but Asmodeus put up a hand signal, warning them to stay put.

“What in the hell are you doing here?” Lucifer growled at his brother. “You are not welcome here, Gabriel.”

Gabriel flashed an easy-going smile at Lucifer. “Easy, my brother. I am not here to cause harm nor to threaten your queen.” Gabriel turned his eyes to me and flashed me a smile. I squirmed uncomfortably in my seat. “Hello, Bela.”

I stayed silent, a headache forming at my temples in his presence. I groaned softly as I reached up to rub my soothing circles near the tops of my ears. Lucifer covered his hands with mine, easing the pain some. “Why are you here, then, Gabriel?”

“To warn you, Lucifer. Father is unhappy. Nothing is going as he wanted it to. He wanted you back with us, Lucifer – back *home*. And instead, you have once again chosen the wrong path.”

“That is not home for me,” Lucifer growled at his brother. “*She* is my home.” He told him, referring to me.

Gabriel bowed his head in understanding. “I know, brother, and your people – they look up to your queen. They adore her. She has a gentle soul – one no one would expect to ever be in Hell, but nonetheless, she is here, soothing the tormented souls of the demons, and ultimately, yours as well.”

“Stop beating around the bush, Gabriel,” Lucifer warned him, his hands growing colder over mine, his body temperature dropping as his temper grew more. I circled my fingers around his wrists, hoping to ease his anger some.

“Father gave Bela’s mother the black magic needed to slip into Hell without you noticing.” A threatening growl sounded from Lucifer’s chest.

I tightened my grip on his wrists in response. “However, he did not take into account your King of Demons being able to sense her, nor did he take into account his loyalty to his queen. He has tasked Bela’s mother with causing an uproar in Hell and getting everyone to turn on your sweet queen.”

“My demons will not turn on her,” Asmodeus spoke up.

“Are you sure of that?” Gabriel asked him. “Black magic is no joke, king.”

Asmodeus grunted. “As I am aware, Angel. My demons have been trained with black magic from the day they became demons. They know how to withstand it, and they know how to fight against it. Our queen is protected. Queen Bela’s mother cannot touch her.”

This didn’t make any sense to me. Would the man above really sacrifice his own children for some “greater good”?

“Why make one of His own suffer? Are we not supposed to be His children?” I demanded to know.

Gabriel softly sighed. “Father works in mysterious ways, queen. Everything is not as black and white as it always seems. You were meant to take Lucifer’s place so Lucifer could come back to Heaven – back home. But he chose to keep you here with him instead. And I cannot fault him for that. My brother found his chance at happiness, and he snagged it with both hands.”

Pain pulsed through my skull. Lucifer growled at the same time I cried out in pain, my vision momentarily flashing white. More pain rolled through my skull, almost as if something were trying to push through.

I jumped up from the bench. “Bela, no!” Lucifer roared.

Screeching and roaring sounded through my head. I screamed in agony, dropping to my knees, tears of blood pouring from my eyes.

Asmodeus roared at the same time that my magic pulsed from my body, knocking everyone to the ground.

The last thing I remembered was Lucifer shouting my name.

THIRTEEN

LUCIFER

I watched as Rufus listened to Bela's breathing and her heart. I had no idea she was connected to the demons like that, and obviously, they hadn't either because as soon as she fell to the ground, they were panicking.

They'd hurt their queen, and damned if Asmodeus hadn't fucking lost his shit because he felt their panic and her pain. He had a hell of a lot of control to be able to calm them all while trying to figure out what the fuck had happened to Bela.

None of us had known they were connected with her.

"Lucifer, I need you to listen." Rufus suddenly stated as he turned his dark eyes to me.

"Listen to what?" I growled at him. "Is she going to fucking be okay or not?"

"She will be fine, but I *need* you to listen." He told me. "Just shut your eyes and listen."

Sighing in irritation, I did as he said, focusing on all of the sounds in the room before I focused on the steady beat of Bela's – my eyes snapped open, and I stared down at Rufus. "There's a baby," I said quietly. My eyes snapped over to my queen, and I swallowed thickly. "She's fucking pregnant."

Rufus nodded at me. "My king, you and our queen will be having a little prince or princess of Hell."

"Holy shit," I whispered. I eased my body down onto the bed beside Bela, and I lightly placed my hand over her still flat belly. She was

pregnant. I couldn't fucking believe it, but we were having a fucking baby together.

Emma popped back into the room and handed me a bottle of pills. "She needs to take these every day." She told me. "She can take them whenever is easiest for her to remember to take them, but she'll need them for her pregnancy." I arched an eyebrow at Emma, wondering why the fuck Bela needed medication during her pregnancy. I wasn't familiar with babies nor what was needed during pregnancy. "They're prenatal vitamins." She explained.

"Oh," I muttered. I set them on the bedside table, making a mental note to have her take them when she woke up. "Well, thank you, Emma." I looked at the doctor. "Is she going to be okay?"

"She will be fine, my king," Rufus informed me. "Just let her rest. I'm sure she'll wake up with a headache, though. Tylenol is safe to give her. I'll leave some in your bathroom for when she wakes up."

"Thank you, Rufus."

"Always happy to be of service to our queen, my king."

He put a bottle of Tylenol in the bathroom before slipping out of my chambers. I pulled Bela into my arms and placed my hand on the side of her head. She sighed in her sleep, her body relaxing. I could feel a bit of pain in my temples, so I knew she was still suffering from the demons crowding in her head like that.

I looked up as Asmodeus stepped into the doorway, his massive frame filling the entryway. "I came to check on the queen, my king."

I gently brushed Bela's hair away from her face with my free hand. "She has a headache," I told him quietly. "But she is otherwise okay."

"I heard you and the doctor mention another heartbeat." He commented. I glared up at him, angry at him for intruding in on our private conversation. He shrugged, not caring at all about my rage at his

eavesdropping. “I hear everything, my king.” He reminded me. “Even when I am not trying to listen.”

I sighed. I knew that as well. It was just another thing on the list of things that made him so fucking powerful. “It explains her nausea, my king. She has not felt well all day.”

“I know,” I said quietly. I did know that much about pregnancies – how nausea and vomiting basically ruled the entire first trimester. “When she wakes, I will have her take Tylenol for her headache and eat some soup and crackers to calm her stomach.”

“My king, I swear to you that I was unaware of her connection with my demons.” Asmodeus suddenly blurted. I sighed. I knew it wasn’t his fault. Hell, I hadn’t known either. “They would have been extremely careful had they known.”

“I know.” I sighed. “It was stupid of me to assume that she had forever lost that connection with them. They’ve always been inside of her head. I had only assumed that they had disconnected from her when she came down to Hell.”

“Your Father is trying to torture her, my king.”

I gritted my teeth. “Father is beginning to really piss me the fuck off.”

“My demons’ loyalty lies with her, and they will go against even my own orders to protect her,” Asmodeus informed me. I snapped my eyes up to him in disbelief. His demons did not disobey him for shit for fear of being killed – slaughtered. “Their will to protect her is stronger than your Father’s will to destroy her. Trust me on that. Nothing will happen to our queen.”

Bela suddenly groaned, her eyes slowly fluttering open. “I will go fetch some soup for her,” Asmodeus said as he turned and walked back out of the room.

“My love, how are you feeling?” I asked her.

“My head.” She mumbled.

I pressed my lips to her temple before I slid off of the bed and walked to our bathroom, grabbing the bottle of Tylenol off of the bathroom counter. After filling a small cup with water, I walked back over to her and sat on the edge of the bed, my body facing hers. “Here, my queen,” I said as I handed her the two tablets in my hand. “Take these. It is Tylenol.”

She accepted the pills with a thankful smile in my direction before she grabbed the glass from me and swallowed them. I quickly took the glass from her once she was finished, and she leaned her head back against the headboard, her eyes shutting.

I could feel the pain pulsing through my temples, so I knew she was basically in agony. And I fucking hated it – hated that all I could do was try to soothe the pain when I wanted to take it all away from her.

Asmodeus stepped back into the room holding a steaming bowl of soup and a pack of saltine crackers. Bela groaned, a frown pulling at her lips. “I’m not hungry, Luc.”

I sighed as I took the bowl from Asmodeus. “You need to eat, my love.”

She shook her head. “I’m still not feeling that good. Please don’t make me.” She begged.

I set the soup on the bedside table and grabbed her hands in mine. “Bela, my queen, look at me.” I softly commanded. She slowly opened her eyes and turned her head to face me. She was so pale that it tore at my heart.

“My little destroyer, you are pregnant,” I told her. I gave her a moment, watching as her eyes widened in disbelief and her lips parted slightly in shock. I rubbed my thumbs over the back of her hands. “I need you to eat, Bela.”

“How do you know I’m pregnant?” She asked me. Tears welled in her eyes. “How was I not the first to know?”

“Oh, my love,” I whispered as I drew her into my arms. She trembled. “I had Rufus examine you after you collapsed earlier. He heard the baby’s heartbeat, and he told me to listen. I heard it as well. You are pregnant, my queen. You are carrying our little prince or princess.”

She threw her arms around my neck, tears sliding down her cheeks. I just held her, allowing her to cry. Asmodeus silently took his spot beside the door, guarding the room and Bela. He closed his eyes, but I knew he was aware of everything that was happening.

I gently pulled Bela’s face from my shoulder after a few minutes and pressed my lips to her cheeks. “Please stop crying, my queen,” I begged her. “I will cherish this baby just as much as I cherish you. But I need you to eat. The crackers may even help you feel a little better.”

She nodded and swiped at her cheeks before she grabbed the bowl of soup from the table. I opened the crackers for her and gave her an encouraging smile. “Do not fret. You will make a fine mother, my queen, and everyone here will love our child just as much as they love you.” I promised her.

“It explains why I was feeling so horrible today.” She said quietly. She sipped some of the broth off of the spoon and sighed, her eyes closing. “Oh, that’s helpful.” She whispered.

“There is some ginger in it,” Asmodeus spoke up. She turned her head to look at him in surprise. I grunted, making Asmodeus’s lips twitch at my annoyance. “I had the cook put some in before I brought it here. It helps nausea.”

“How the hell do you know so much?” I asked him.

He only grunted. “I listen, my king.”

I rolled my eyes before I looked back at Bela. She giggled. “It’s funny seeing you annoyed, Luc.”

I flashed her a grin, loving the sound of her laugh. It soothed the more tormented parts of my soul. “Drink your soup, Bela.”

She pouted at me, but took another sip, her eyes closing in contentment. The pain in her head was lessening by the second, and the churning in her stomach had almost completely disappeared.

Guess I was going to have to start listening more, too, especially if I wanted to be able to help the more human side of my queen.

FOURTEEN

After Bela's headache had gone away and the churning in her stomach had settled, she had demanded to train again. So, against my better judgement, I allowed her. Bela was becoming headstrong, becoming more independent and more like a queen.

I was proud of her, even if it did drive me up the wall sometimes – like now when I just wanted her to fucking rest.

So, for the past two days, she had been training almost non-stop with Kyle, but she had gained control of her magic, and now, Kyle was simply training her on how to wield it to do what she wanted.

And she looked fucking magnificent as she fully embraced her true self, finally becoming comfortable in her own skin.

I only stepped in to remind her to eat, drink water, relax when she wasn't feeling good, and force her to come home and get rest at the end of each day.

"You chose your queen well, my king," Asmodeus said from next to me as he watched Bela use her magic on her brother, sending him flying back a few hundred feet.

I smirked. My queen was stronger than her brother, and he was the Angel of Death.

"She chose me, Asmodeus. I would not have brought her here if she had not chosen to be here with me."

"It is clear that she loves all of us, my king – even those of us who are not worthy of such things." He looked over at me. "She is perfect."

Bela suddenly stopped, and discomfort flared through my abdomen quickly followed by nausea. With a muttered curse, I appeared at her side.

I wrapped one arm around her waist and pressed my other hand to her belly. “It is time to call it quits for the day, my queen,” I told her.

Shockingly, she nodded her head in agreement. “Okay.” She closed her eyes, a quiet moan of discomfort sounding from her. “I don’t feel good at all.”

I leaned down and slowly lifted her into my arms, being careful not to jostle her too much. I knew vomiting wasn’t comfortable for her, and I wanted to avoid it at all costs. Even I wasn’t fond of that raw, burning sensation in my throat.

Kyle walked over and pressed a kiss to the side of her head. “Feel better, Sis.”

He disappeared right after. Asmodeus silently followed behind me with her other three guards as I carried her back towards the castle. Asmodeus suddenly released a low rumble. I looked over my shoulder at him in question, but he only shook his head.

I clenched my jaw but forced myself to keep walking. Something had happened, but he didn’t want to alarm Bela. But I needed to know what the fuck was going on.

Later, my king. Asmodeus suddenly spoke into my mind. Your brother is handling it for the moment as are my demons. Let them do their job.

I protectively tightened my arms around Bela. *What the fuck is going on, Asmodeus?* I demanded as I turned a corner in the castle.

The witch has made her move, and she is attacking my demons, trying to work her way here to the castle. Your brother and my people are holding her off. Take care of the queen, my king. This will ultimately be her battle in the end. She needs to rest as much as she possibly can before her mother makes it here.

I forced myself not to lose control of my temper. My queen would not be facing her mother – especially not while she was pregnant. I would not

run the risk that something happened to her or our baby. If Bela lost our child, I knew it would devastate her. My queen would never recover from that.

Already, she was so attached to our little one. I'd lost count of the number of times I'd caught her with her hands over her belly with a soft smile on her face.

She would make an amazing mother, and I would not let a single fucking soul rip that opportunity away from her.

Asmodeus suddenly roared, and the sound of demons screeching reached my ears. Bela jerked her head up off of my shoulder, her wide, alarmed eyes meeting mine. I quickly set her on her feet as demons surrounded us, protecting their queen.

Asmodeus burst through the circle, his body rippling, his true form begging to be released. "My king, let me get her to safety," Asmodeus begged me.

"No!" Bela snapped. Black magic filled the air, almost feeling like it was burning my skin. My queen's eyes flashed gold with the color of her magic, and her skin began to shimmer.

"We need to get you to safety, Bela," I told her. "This is not an option for you."

"Like hell, it's not!" She snapped up at me. A thunderous growl ripped from my chest. "This is *my* fight. She ruined my body, almost ripped away my chance at forever with you." Pain lanced through my chest – her pain – at the reminder. "What I did to my father was an accident." Her eyes burned with tears, and my soul screamed for her, begging to destroy everyone around us because of her pain. I could feel it as if it were my own. "I was not in control of myself. I was being tormented and controlled. But she has come into my home and has tried to destroy my people. I will not stand for this, Lucifer."

I gripped her arm, yanking her up close to me. “You will go with Asmodeus and allow him to protect you, Bela.” I snapped down at her, not in the mood for her hard-headedness right now. This wasn’t the time for her independent streak to show.

She defiantly glared up at me. “He is the one person in Hell who is not affected by any kind of magic. You will go with him.”

“No!” She shouted. Her power pulsed from her body, knocking me back a couple of feet. Her glow shined a little bit brighter. It was a fucking beautiful sight.

“You’re not strong enough to stop her,” Asmodeus told me. I roared, my wings ripping from my back. “Your child holds the same magic she does. She is twice as strong right now. All we can do is protect her here.” He told me. “Arguing with her right now is going to be pointless, my king.”

“Bela, I swear to you, I will burn the entire fucking world if something happens to you.” I snarled. “There will not be a piece of humanity left.”

She reached up and gripped my face in her hands. Her magic filtered into me, relaxing me and calming me. “Have faith in me, my king.” She begged me. “I am strong enough for this.”

I clenched my jaw. Every bit of me rejected this. I wanted her safe and away from harm.

“You had better hope so,” I warned her.

The ground shook, but Bela stood strong, her glowing, golden eyes staying locked on mine. “Nothing will happen to me.” She swore. “Because if something does, then something happens to my baby. And I will *never* allow the ugliness of this world to touch my child.” She promised.

She then released me. Demons screeched, their feet pounding the floor. A sexy, wicked smile tilted her lips. It *almost* diminished my rage. “Have

faith.” She told me.

I gritted my teeth. “I’m trying, my queen.”

She wrapped her hand around the back of my neck and leaned up on her tiptoes. “I am Lucifer’s queen.” She softly spoke, her lips brushing mine. I growled as I gripped her hips, yanking her body closer to mine as I wrapped my wings around her – cocooning her. “I may have a soft heart, Luc, but when someone fucks with my family – with my people – I will *destroy* them.”

“She’s here,” Asmodeus informed us. My skin began to burn from the black magic. It felt like poison being poured over me.

Bela suddenly kissed me, her tongue meeting mine almost instantly. A possessive growl sounded from my chest as I kissed her back.

The burning sensation disappeared, and she pulled back from me. “She cannot touch you, my king.”

With that, she stepped back from me. Asmodeus roared, his body changing and shifting until he stood in his true form. A massive giant stood before us, his skin gone. You could literally see his muscle and his blood vessels. His eyes were black, soulless pits.

Bela grabbed my hand in hers. “Do not let go.” She told me. And despite her bravery, I could feel her fear as if it were my own.

I squeezed her hand. “Never, my queen.” I pressed my lips to the shell of her ear. “Destroy her,” I whispered.

FIFTEEN

BELA

My mother glared at me from the entrance to the castle. Asmodeus's demons were surrounding me – protecting me. Lucifer was holding my hand in his, keeping me at his side. Asmodeus was a gigantic, silent force standing behind me and Lucifer, ready to move forward and protect me if needed.

Even my brother was standing beside Asmodeus.

I was well protected, and it was making her furious.

My hand shook in Lucifer's as I met her hateful, furious gaze. I swallowed thickly. I'd never been able to be the child she'd wanted. I was different – so different – because my fate had been set in stone long before I was born.

I was supposed to be Lucifer's second chance at redemption, and I was supposed to take his position, crowning me the queen of Hell.

But it hadn't happened like that, and before long, Lucifer was preparing – ready to make me the queen of Hell – but *alongside* him. He didn't want redemption.

He wanted his queen.

"I did not mean to kill Father," I spoke up, so many emotions clogging my throat, filtering into my voice. I swallowed thickly. "It was an accident, Mom. I was not in control." I pleaded with her.

Lucifer released a roar and ripped his hand from mine, dropping to his knees. His eyes blazed with rage. I tried to move towards him, but an invisible force kept us apart.

“Let him go!” I yelled at her. I didn’t want to face off with her like this, but I knew I would have to. She didn’t care about my feelings – didn’t care about hurting her daughter.

She only wanted revenge.

“You took my mate away from me – took away my husband – my *forever!*” My mother screeched. I glared at her. “I will not leave until you feel this same pain that I do!”

My magic pulsed around the room, knocking her into the wall. “I said to let him go!” I shouted. “*Now, mother!*”

I could feel her magic crawling over my skin. Lucifer roared in pain, and that’s all it took. A demonic screech ripped from my throat as my magic pulsed, knocking everyone to the ground. It wrapped around my mother’s body like hands and dragged her to me.

Her eyes widened in fear as she tried to escape, but black magic was no match for mine. I was powerful – more powerful than she or God had imagined I would be.

I gripped her head with my hands and glared down into her eyes. “Pity you let hatred be your downfall.” I snarled.

I snapped her neck. All of the black magic escaped from her soul, slithering into the walls of the castle. Lucifer jumped up from the floor just as my body swayed, my own magic coming back into me like a sledgehammer into my chest.

“Bela!” He shouted.

His arms came around me, his knees sickeningly connecting with the floor as he caught me.

“Bela?” He asked, panic in his voice. My eyes slowly fluttered shut. “My queen, talk to me.” He begged.

“I’m tired,” I mumbled.

“Bela!” He roared. The screeching of demons and the roar of Asmodeus was the last thing I heard before that familiar darkness blanketed me in its comfort.

★ ★ ★

LUCIFER

Rufus was quickly by my side with his nurse, Emma. “Take her to your chambers, my king. I am sure she only passed out from overexertion, but I just want to be sure.”

“Get rid of the body,” I ordered Asmodeus as I stood up with my queen cradled in my arms.

“Already have it being taken care of.” He told me as he shifted back into his more human form. “The queen?”

I drew in a deep breath. “I don’t feel any pain, and our bond is calm. As Rufus said, I think it is only because of overexertion, but it’s better to be safe than sorry.”

I was hoping that nothing serious had happened. Her chest had slightly caved in before repositioning back into place when her magic had returned to her.

Kyle brushed his fingers over his little sister’s face as I carried her towards our chambers. “I always knew she was strong.” He said quietly. “Rest, Little Sis.”

He stepped aside, allowing me to continue into our chambers. After gently placing her on the bed, I stepped back some, allowing Rufus to do his examination. I stared down at her peacefully sleeping face, unable to

help the concern and worry curling in my gut as I waited for Rufus to tell me whether she was one hundred percent okay or not.

“My king, she is fine.” He finally told me. I breathed a sigh of relief, my shoulders sagging a little, some of that tension leaving my body. “It is just as I thought – a little overexertion. Nothing that some rest and possibly a nice, hot, soaking bath wouldn’t help.”

“Thank you, Rufus.”

He nodded once, bowing his head in respect afterward. “It is my pleasure, my king. May you two continue to live happy, healthy lives together.”

I sat down on the bed beside Bela, holding her hand in mine. I brought it up to my lips, pressing a kiss to each of her knuckles. “For eternity, my queen. Nothing will ever be strong enough to tear us apart. Father failed. Our love for one another is too great.” I reached down and brushed some of her hair out of her face. “But now, we can start our forever together.”

Her eyes slowly fluttered open, locking on mine for a moment before she closed them again. Her hand lightly squeezed mine. I smiled.

“For eternity, my king.” She whispered.

EPILOGUE

I smiled at my queen as she stepped out of the castle. Asmodeus was behind her with Cerberus at her side. Neither of them ever strayed far from her, especially with her current pregnancy. After taking her mother's life almost two years ago, her bond had grown with Asmodeus and his demons, connecting with them in a very strange, yet helpful way.

They always knew when she required something, especially help. And someone would always come running if I wasn't near her.

And it was extremely helpful, especially now that she was currently seven months pregnant with our little princess, with our little prince being fucking hell on wheels.

"Daddy!" He screamed as he came running across the field towards me. One of the shape-shifters – like Cerberus – was running alongside him, always protecting him. The shape-shifter wasn't huge like Cerberus, but he shifted into a medium-sized dog – a perfect size for Callum.

I scooped Callum up into my arms and pressed a kiss to the top of his head as I moved towards his mother, my hand instinctively reaching out to rest on her swollen belly.

"Hello, my queen." I greeted as I leaned down to press a soft kiss to her lips. "How are my two favorite girls?"

"Well, I'm tired and am in dire need of a nap." She told me.

"She can't sleep." Asmodeus rumbled from behind her. Bela rolled her eyes, and a smirk tugged at my lips in response. "I believe our queen requires some . . . assistance."

Bela's cheeks burned red at Asmodeus's words. Cerberus barked out a laugh as I smirked down at my little destroyer. "Is that so, my queen?" I asked her.

She glowered at me before she sent Asmodeus on his back on the ground without ever moving a single part of her body. "I'm going back to bed." She grumbled.

I pressed a kiss to Callum's cheek before I handed him over to Cerberus. "Keep him entertained," I ordered. "She's extra feisty today."

Cerberus laughed. "You've got it, my king."

"Daddy, cheer Mommy up," Callum ordered.

I grinned at him. "Trust me – I will," I promised as I quickly moved after her.

Bela squealed as I swiftly lifted her into my arms, never breaking my stride as I carried her into the castle and towards our chambers. "You're such a dick." She muttered as she crossed her arms over her chest, pouting as she did so.

Fuck, she was adorable.

"We'll see how much of a dick you think I am after I'm done worshipping your perfect as fuck body," I told her, my signature smirk tilting my lips.

I quickly laid her down on the bed and moved over her, my lips taking hers in a hard, savage kiss that wreaked the best kind of havoc on both of our souls.

I took my time taking off each layer of her dress until that perfect body was laid out on the bed before me, nothing covering her to hide her from me.

"Perfect," I whispered as I kissed her again.

"Luc." She moaned as I nipped at the skin right below her ear.

“Patience, my little destroyer. Good things come to those who wait.” I reminded her.

Her breath hitched in her throat, a moan quickly following as I slid my hand between her thick thighs. She moaned and spread her legs further for me, her back arching off of the bed.

Even seven months pregnant, she still looked so fucking beautiful. I would never get tired of this beautiful woman.

Forever and eternity never felt so fucking amazing.

★ ★ ★

And it felt even better with our new, little addition to the family.

Caroline Emma was born two months later on her due date. She entered the world with an ear-piercing scream, quickly making it known that she would be just as vocal as her mother.

And just as fucking beautiful.

Every feature was all her mother except for the little black wings that liked to occasionally rip from her back when she was happy and content – or angry.

The moment I held her, she immediately had me wrapped around her tiny finger.

And Callum?

Caroline would forever have a protector through him.

My little family was absolutely perfect.

“Stop looking at me like you want to impregnate me again.” My beautiful queen snapped at me from our bed where she was nursing

Caroline. Callum was sprawled across her lap reading a book.

I smirked at her. “Is the offer on the table?” I teased.

She scowled, and without even lifting a finger, she sent me flat on my ass on the floor.

“Is that answer enough for you?”

I grinned as I stood up. “I’m only joking, babe. I’ll give you some time.” I promised. I took a seat beside her on the bed and reached out to trail my fingers over my little princess’s soft cheek. “These two are enough for me right now, my little destroyer.” I looked up at her. “We have forever.”

“We have eternity, my king.” She responded, her eyes softening with love and adoration for me.

I leaned forward and softly kissed her.

Forever.

And eternity.

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She resides in Georgia with her fiancé, three cats – Tyson, Kream, and Midnight – and her two dogs – Mocha and Bailey. She can normally be found in her office on her big, comfy chair with her laptop on her lap as she dives into her next creative world.

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